THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH
IN THE THEOLOGY OF YVES CONGAR, O.P.

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CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND AND SETTING OF CONGAR'S THEOLOGY

In order to understand a particular theologian's work, it is always necessary to comprehend both how he relates to his theological heritage and to his own theological milieu. One must know those theological currents of the past which he rejects and those which he sees to still be weighted with the present and the future. One must also be aware of how he stands in relation to contemporary theological movements. The intent of this first chapter is to provide this background knowledge for the theology of Yves Congar.[1]

The first and larger section will be an overview of the major movements, motifs, and theologians in the development of modern Roman Catholic ecclesiology. Particular attention will be given to Johann Adam Möhler and John Henry Newman, who are the modern theologians who have had the most influence upon Congar's doctrine of the Church. Congar's own thought will be mentioned only in one place, and consequently, no explicit connections will be drawn in this chapter between the history of Roman Catholic ecclesiology and Congar's own position. It is anticipated that frequently these connections will be self-evident as the analysis of his thought proceeds in later chapters, although in some instances we will also make explicit reference to this discussion.

The second section is a sketch of some of the major characteristics and interests of the so-called "New Theology" as it has developed in France. Even though we will occasionally refer to later writings, most of our attention will be focused on the period prior to 1950. Our consideration will be primarily of the work of Jean Daniélou and Henri de Lubac. They are both central to, and representative of, the New Theology. In this treatment of the more immediate setting of Congar's theology, certain similarities and relationships between its concerns and those of Daniélou and de Lubac will be indicated.

It has been observed that Roman Catholic theologians have always put together the treatise on the Church as the Jews built the Temple after the Exile: with sword in hand.[2] From the fourteenth century to quite recent times, Roman Catholic ecclesiology was formed largely in response to various pressures and attacks, such as the struggles between Church and State, the challenge of various heresies, and the rise of an increasingly secular civilization. The result was a strategically necessary preoccupation with matters concerning the power and authority of the hierarchy of the Church.

An indication of the onesidedness, of an almost totally juridical view of the Church, is that prior to the fourteeenth century theologians did not write separate treatises, as we know them, on the Church. For instance, if one looks at the writings of St. Thomas (c.1224-1274) one does not find a particular section or book on the Church. Yet scattered throughout his works are explicit principles of a theology of the Church which, it has been argued, stand firmly in the line of the Church Fathers and not that of the theology that began to develop a century later.

> That tradition can be characterized by three marks: the Church is contemplated as a Spirit-centered reality, as the Body whose soul and principle of unity is the Holy Ghost. The Church is contemplated in Christ, as Christ is contemplated in the Church. And the inward Church is not separated from the outward Church, social, hierarchical and sacramental.[3]

The same may be said for other great Scholastics, such as Alexander of Hales (1175-1245) and St. Bonaventura (1221-1274), of the thirteenth century. The reasons why these theologians wrote no separate treatise on the Church are debatable. The opinion has been given that this was a deliberate decision, based on their conviction that the Church is not a separate reality, but "the very mystery--Christian, trinitarian, man-centred, Christ-centred and sacramental--which is the subject of theology."[4] But there is no certain indication of their motivation.[5]

In any case, it is clear that the strife between the princes and the popes during the fourteenth century did evoke separate treatises on the Church. Two examples of works of this nature are De ecclesiastica potestate by Giles of Rome (c.1247-1316) and De potestate regia et papali by John of Paris (c.1240-1306), which were written right after the turn of the century. Giles defended the Papacy's right to use direct power in secular affairs. John of Paris argued that the pope had only indirect power. It was his position that the Church extends and "reproduces" the humanity of Christ. And since Christ had not exercised secular power, ecclesiastical and secular powers should be kept separate. Controversy between the two should be settled by a third party, that is, by a Council.[6] But the key point for our inquiry is indicated in the two titles. The focus is upon the Church's power and government.

This emphasis upon the exterior and juridical aspect of the Church received further impetus by the Church's response to Wycliffe, and the Hussite movement, and other spiritual sects. Increased attention was given to the visible means of salvation, the regulation of Christian life by the Church, and the powers of the pope. The term "Church" is seen as directly designating the visible reality and only indirectly the life of grace. And since these sects were found to be heretical, even what was of value in them became suspect. Their plea for less of the Church and more of Christ was ignored. Because they wrongly attacked, from the Roman Catholic point of view, such elements of the essence of the Church as the hierarchical priesthood, Roman Catholicism generally failed to respond positively to what was valid in their protests. And it was this type of reaction which continued to produce a onesided ecclesiology.[7]

This process of ecclesiology-by-reaction continues with the Protestant Reformation. In response to the latter's rejection of its priesthood, sacraments, magisterium, and papal primacy, theologians of the Roman Catholic Church entered into a polemical defense of the Church's institutional and visible dimension. The Council of Trent (1545-1563) did not formulate an explicit ecoclesiology. But it did attack such Protestant doctrines as the priesthood of all believers, sola scriptura, and the meaning and number of the sacraments.

And in this ecclesiological formulation by the post-Tridentine theologian, St. Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621), one finds a complete focusing upon the outward or external:

> There is only one church, not two. And this one true Church is the community of men brought together by profession of the true faith and communion in the same sacraments, and under the administration of recognized pastors and especially the sole vicar of Christ on Earth, the Roman pontiff.[8]

In this definition, there is an explicit denial of any type of distinction between the visible and the invisible Church. And it makes it quite clear who belongs to the true Church and who does not. The first element, profession of true faith, excludes all those who have never belonged to the Church, such as the Jews and pagans, and those who have left it, the heretics and apostates. The second element, communion in the sacraments, excludes catechumens and the excommunicated. And the third element, submission to recognized pastors, excludes schismatics. Everyone else is within the boundary of the Church--including the ungodly. Consequently, there is a complete rejection of the view of Augustine that some seem to be inside the Church who are in reality outside, while others seem to be outside who are in reality inside. The

Church can be adequately defined without mentioning its internal or spiritual dimension.

> The characteristic note of this definition is its insistence on visibility. 'All other definitions call for inner virtues in order to declare anyone a member of the Church, and consequently say that the Church is invisible.' Naturally Bellarmine acknowledges that 'all the virtues are to be found in the Church: faith, hope, charity, etc.'. But he does not think it necessary to include them for a definition of the Church to be consonant with the Scriptures: 'Nevertheless, for anyone to be able to be declared a member of this true Church, of which the Scriptures speak, we do not think that any inner virtue is required of him.' The outward profession of the faith and communion in the sacrament suffices, and these are things which the senses can establish. Bellarmine does not hesitate to liken membership of the Church to membership of a particular nationality: 'The Church is indeed a community (coetus) of men, as visible... as the community of the Roman people, or the kingdom of France or the republic of Venice.'[9]

With this definition of Bellarmine we have a classic example of what is often termed post-Tridentine ecclesiology, although it has been seen that its major motifs precede Trent. Trinitarian, Christological, pneumatological, and anthropological concerns are not considered as essential to a definition of the Church. The Church is understood as a society, distinguished from others by its perfection, capable of being juridically defined, and governed as a monarchy by the sovereign pontiff. This view has had an almost incalculable influence upon Roman Catholicism, as shall be evident at later points in our overview.

In the seventeenth century, the same onesided tendency was at work in the condemnation of Jansenism. Since Jansenism drew its inspiration from "Augustinian Mysticism,"[10] and stressed the "interior" aspects of the Church, this is not surprising. Nor is it surprising that its attempt to return to the early Church as the norm of the Church again resulted in an accentuation of the authority of the pope. The durability of this rejection is indicated by the fact that J. A. Möhler was accused of Jansenism in the early 1800's and that several bishops at Vatican I were against using the concept of the "mystical Body" because it savoured of Jansenism.[11]

Much the same can be said for the losing struggle that Gallicanism fought, with somewhat varying positions but with the same major thrust during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with Ultramontanism. Based on historical studies, Gallicanism's central inspiration was the image of the primitive Church, which it saw as upholding the autonomy of the national Church with its own traditions and customs, and thus the autonomy of the national episcopate.[12] On this basis, Gallicanism supported the independence of the State from the interference of Rome on matters concerning the Church. Like the position of the Ultramontanes who asserted papal supremacy over the temporal rulers in all ecclesiastical matters, Gallicanism was strongly shaped by political considerations. And in the struggle that occurred, the attention of both sides concentrated almost exclusively upon the hierarchical aspect of the Church.[13] The onesidedness continued.

The first major step in overcoming this form of ecclesiology and in establishing a more "balanced" doctrine of the

Church was taken by the Catholic Tübingen school at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Johann Michael Sailer (1751-1832) was its first spokesman. For him, the Church is basically living tradition. It is the communication of the living Word of God. It is the living mediatrix of a living spirituality. This tradition, which goes back to the apostles, is perpetuated in the Church, "the divine-human organism," under the active protection and guidance of God. The significance of the step that he took is seen in Sailer's basic change in priorities. For him, the visible aspect of the Church exists in order to "nourish" the invisible and not vice versa.[14]

The most influential theologian in the Tübingen school was Johann Adam Möhler. Möhler, who lived only forty-two years (1796-1838), played a foundational role in the development of Roman Catholic ecclesiology in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[15] Certainly a good case can be made for claiming that Möhler is the father of modern Roman Catholic theology.[16] And there is no doubt that it was his thought which in a number of areas pointed the way for moving beyond the so-called post-Tridentine ecclesiology.[17] He was influenced by the intellectual currents of Romanticism and Absolute Idealism, particularly their use of organic models and their emphasis upon life, love, and spirit reconciling disparate elements into the harmonies of a concrete universal.

Written in 1825, Möhler's first major work on the Church, Die Einheit in der Kirche oder das Prinzip des Katholizimus dargestellt im Geiste der drei ersten Jahrhunderte, defines the Church as a community of believers brought together in love by the Holy Spirit. And again, the title of the work is revealing, for it was by returning to the Church Fathers that Möhler realized that the dominant juridical understanding of the Church was clearly at variance with the theology of the Fathers. For him, the Church is the creation of the Spirit, which is not only present with it at the beginning but continues to be present with it down through the ages as the eternal source of its life.[18]

As already indicated, the direct result of this ecclesiology is that the Church is seen as being a community. In one of the above quotations from Bellarmine the term community appeared. But in it, the stress was upon visible structure. For Möhler, the emphasis is upon the dynamic and Spirit-filled dimension. Life that has its source in the Holy Spirit is not life as an isolated individual. The Holy Spirit draws one away from this condition of egotism, uniting all the faithful into one spiritual community. And the unity of the Church is not just a homogeneous mass. It includes oppositions and differences. In fact, these are beneficial for the vitality and perfection of the whole. The Apostolic Church provides a good example of this. It was full of strong personalities and convictions: Paul, John, Peter. Yet their differences, which never disrupted the unity of the fellowship, enriched rather than impoverished the Church. The same principle remained true throughout the Church's history.[19]

The fact that Möhler understands the Church to be a community naturally influences his interpretation of the hierarchy. This is seen by the way in which he outlines the incorporation of the individual into the life of the Christian community. No one baptizes himself. He is referred to someone who already belongs to the community. And once he has entered into this community it is not a momentary matter. His total life is to be upheld and enriched by its fellowship, which spans both space and time. Through the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments which were entrusted to the apostolic ministry, the believer is linked with the community of the past, and made a living part of it.[20] Christ originated apostolic succession in order that the community would be visibly one. The college of bishops is a means and expression of this unity of the Christian community. But it too must have a visible head: hence the pope. Priests are in turn a "multiplication" of the bishop. In this way the whole communion is formed together into the one body of Christ.[21]

The heavy emphasis that Möhler gives to the concept of the Church as community rooted in the presence and action of the Holy Spirit also influences the way in which he views the reality of faith. For him, faith is not primarily a type of rational cognition. It is more closely akin to a relationship of love. One cannot comprehend the gospel from the outside. One can only understand it from within the community, the Church, that has been created by the gospel.[22] The

Christian faith is fundamentally a propagation of life (in Christ) and not a transmission of concepts. Since knowledge always proceeds from life, faith precedes dogma. And concepts (or institutional forms) are never fully capable of expressing the depth of faith or the life of the community in which it is nourished.

Möhler's understanding of tradition clearly reflects this view of the living transmission of faith. Tradition, rooted in the presence of the Holy Spirit and apostolic succession, is the identity between the faith (or "consciousness" as Möhler terms it) of the individual and the faith or consciousness of the total community. He distinguishes, but does not make a separation, between subjective tradition, the general or ecclesiastical "sense" of the meaning of revelation, and objective tradition, the expression of this "sense" or consciousness in the various historical monuments (Scripture, the liturgy, creeds, Church fathers, etc.). He holds that the former, the sense or consciousness of faith, has been given to the whole community, and not just to the hierarchy. However, this does not mean that the latter does not have a special role to play in the formulation of dogma. Möhler also holds that tradition is necessary for the interpretation of Scripture.[23] Heretics inevitably claim that their positions are based upon Scripture. As a result, it is tradition that keeps the believer within the unity of the Church by preventing him from having a "private" interpretation of Scripture. Tradition is what provides certainity in the sphere of biblical exegesis.[24]

With his emphasis upon the "life" quality of the Church and tradition, it is reasonable to expect that Möhler would see the dogma of the Church as not being static but developing. And this is the case, in spite of the fact that one doctrine of faith has existed throughout the history of the Church. The reason for this development is that since tradition and hence doctrine live in human minds and hearts they are subject to change under the influence of different historical settings and challenges. Since revelation entered into human form and history, it continues to be identified with the development of these forms. Through the opposition of various heresies and through the thrust of historical reason towards a deeper grasp of reality, the implicit content of revelation becomes explicit.[25] Changing historical situations, with new questions and problems, and new concepts also have meant that the one faith has been expressed in a multitude of different forms--but without uttering its substance. The forms themselves are never absolute. Only the substance, the Word of God, is unchanging. The Church's understanding of the Gospel grows and develops, but not the Gospel itself.

During the nineteenth century, the type of position that Möhler had developed remained a type of "underground" theology which only much later would emerge and indicate its true strength. In that period leading up to and including Vatican I (1869-70) the juridical and hierarchically oriented post-Tridentine ecclesiology would continue to be the dominant and temporarily victorious view.

In 1831 Mauro Cappellari (1765-1846), who took the name of Gregory XVI, followed Pius VIII as pope. In 1791, Cappellari wrote a work entitled The Triumph of the Holy-See and the Church. Two years after he became pope it was translated into French and German. His election and reign were a sign of the acceptance of the theology expressed in this work. Against Gallicanism's view of the early Church, Cappellari held that the Church had always had a monarchical form of government. Hence it must continue to have that form. Moreover, he held that the Church is to be identified with its form of government. This meant that the Church is infallible only because the pope, its head and foundation, is infallible.[26]

Similar forces were at work in France. Joseph de Maistre (1753-1821), in Du pape, affirmed the infallibility of the pope, drawing upon political analogies, seen in the perspective of the absolute monarchy of Louis XIV, rather than upon biblical or patristic images. Basically, when de Maistre thought of the reality of the Church he thought of the pope. In the final analysis, Christianity rests on the sovereign pontiff. From a quite different political stance, Lammenais (1782-1854) also focused upon papal power. He too saw the existence of the Church depending upon the pope.[27]

Ultramontane ecclesiology was also dominant during this period in Rome. Perrone (1794-1876), Passaglia (1812-1887), and Franzelin (1816-1886) all stressed the visible elements of the Church, and particularly the way in which the Pope is an agent and manisfestation of its unity. However, through their study of the Greek Fathers and the influence of Möhler, these theologians placed papal authority within a different context and also presented the Church in a less juridical and sociological manner.

Perrone based the infallibility of the pope on the infallibility of the Church, which had been established to conserve the deposit of faith. This is quite a significant shift from de Maistre or even Cappellari. For Perrone, papal infallibility and power is situated in the Church, in the communion of the Body of Christ, and not over it.[28] His position was to have an influence upon Vatican I--and in this light, it should also be observed that the only context in which he discusses the role of the bishops is that of their obedience to the pope. Yet while Perrone affirmed that the Church is a society, he goes on to affirm that it is therefore a moral person, which, accordingly, must have not only a body but a soul or vital principle. This principle is sanctifying grace. Again, it is obvious that this is a step towards a more "balanced" ecclesiology.[29]

As suggested, a similar thrust is to be found in the theology of the other three theologians. Rather than dealing with papal infallibility on some political model, Passaglia supports the Ultramontane thesis by an examination of scriptural and patristic texts. Likewise in his De Ecclesia Christi, he begins his examination of the nature of the Church from biblical and patristic images. And while he certainly does not minimize the external aspects of the Church, he also emphasizes its internal aspects and indicates the relationship between these two dimensions. In addition, he develops the Pauline metaphor of the Church as the Body of Christ and Augustine's description of the Church as "the mystical Body of Christ."

These same themes are taken up by Franzelin. He views the Church as a continuation of the Incarnation, defining it as the Bride of Christ and as the mystical Body of Christ. He insists that the visible and invisible dimensions are not just juxtaposed to each other but are two aspects of the one Church. Each part of the Church, including the hierarchy, must be seen from both perspectives. This also had its influence upon the first chapter of the preparatory draft of the schema De Ecclesia that was prepared for consideration by Vatican I. However, it was Schrader who played a decisive role in the preparation of this document, and who surprised many of the Church fathers by defining the Church as the mystical body of Christ.[30]

The first chapter of the schema prepared for the Council reads as follows:

> The Church is the mystical body of Christ.
>
> The only Son of God, who enlightens every man born into this world, and whose help has never in any age failed the luckless sons of Adam, when time had arrived at the fullness fixed in advance by eternal wisdom, having been made like to men, appeared visibly in the form of our body which he had assumed, so that earthly, carnal men, putting on the new man who was created by God in justice and the holiness of truth, might form a mystical body of which he should be head or chief.
>
> In order thus to bring about the union of this mystical body, the Lord Christ instituted the holy bath of baptismal regeneration

> and renovation, through which the sons of men, divided among themselves by so many different appellations and above all fallen from grace through sin might, when cleansed from all the stains of their errors, become members of one and the same body and, united to their divine master through faith, hope and charity, might all be animated by his sole Spirit and receive in abundance the gifts of the heavenly graces and the charisms.
>
> Such is the admirable representation of the Church which should be set before the minds of the faithful so that it may be firmly anchored there, and which cannot be over-stressed; the head of the Church is Christ; it is from him that the whole body, firmly held together and united by an operation proportionate to each member, derives its growth in order to be built up in charity.[31]

The notes which accompany the schema indicate why the term "mystical Body" was chosen to describe the nature of the Church. First, this term is the one which is used most frequently in Scripture. Secondly, it expresses the most intimate and most important aspect of the Church, that is, its divine form and quality. Thirdly, it adequately answers the Protestant criticism that Roman Catholicism considers only the external or perceptible elements of the Church. Fourthly, it alone provides a sufficient foundation for considering the properties and powers of the Church. And finally, it calls attention to the most neglected element in ecclesiology.[32] However, the content of this first chapter was not theologically integrated with the rest of this document which continued to reflect the juridically oriented ecclesiastical tradition.

Chapter II affirms that Jesus Christ has founded and organized the Church, and that the religion of Christ lives only in the society which he has instituted. Chapter III proposes that the Church has not only received its existence but its constitution from Christ. Its properties cannot be modified because they have been given by Him. A major emphasis is also given to guidance of the Holy Spirit. Chapter IV stresses, against Protestantism, the visible character of the Church, especially magisterium and priesthood. Chapter V states that the Church is indivisible and that non-Roman Catholic communities are not part of this unity. VI and VII hold that consequently it must be taken with the utmost seriousness that the Roman Catholic Church is the true Church and that there is no salvation outside of the Church. Yet the schema does indicate that this applies only to those persons who are found outside by their own decision and not to those who are not individually responsible, such as a Protestant who has been nurtured within his own ecclesiastical community and wrongly considers it to be the true Church. Chapter VIII begins the exposition of the properties of the Church, beginning with indefectibility. It is followed by a discussion of infallibility in Chapter IX. This is a charism which has been given the Church by Christ and is not to be confused with inspiration nor with new revelation. Rather the charism of infallibility is given to the Church in order that it might conserve without alteration the Word of God already revealed and contained in Scripture and Tradition. Chapter X defends the hierarchical structure of the Church, suggesting that all of the apostles and not just Peter were given the special responsibility of guarding the faith--although it does not explicitly mention the term bishop. It is only with Chapter XI that the primacy of the pope is discussed. Before the Council there had been consideration given to making this subject a separate document but it was decided to treat it as a part of the total definition of the Church. Christ has given to Peter and to his successors a universal and supreme power to govern. This chapter does not mention the infallibility of the pope. The last four sections deal with questions of Church and State.[33]

Because the Council was disrupted by Napolean's declaration of war upon Prussia, the total schema was never discussed by the general congregation. But a number of written comments on the schema have been preserved. They are particularly critical of the first chapter. The concept of "mystical Body" was thought to be vague and metaphorical in character, and thus more appropriate for mystical theology than for ecclesiology. Because of the reservations, Father Kleutgen produced a second draft for discussion. Like the first it did not receive official discussion and the Fathers did not even have time to make written comments upon it. However, it is worth noting that the concept of the mystical Body has been moved to the background. There is no way of being certain, but it is highly probable that if the Council had been able to treat the whole doctrine of the Church what would have emerged would have been more closely related to Kleutgen's formulation than to Schrader's.[34]

As is well known, only the question of papal infallibibity was dealt with by the Council. And thus partly because the Council was never able to finish its work, and partly because of its stronger Ultramontane sentiments, the section on the Church which the Council Fathers approved, represents a type of high mark in considering the Church in only its juridical and hierarchical aspects--and in both cases the focus of attention being the pope. For the two reasons given, ecclesiology had been reduced to papal "hierarchology." But if the motifs of Sailer and Möhler, as well as the more moderate ones of the "Roman" theologians, were not to play a major role in the Council's decree on the Church, the Council upheld the "Roman" theologians' position that papal infallibility must be situated _in_ the Church and not _over_ it.

> ...The Roman Pontiff, when he speaks _ex cathedra_, that is, when carrying out the duty of the pastor and teacher of all Christians in accord with his supreme apostolic authority he explains a doctrine of faith or morals to be held by the universal Church, through the divine assistance promised him in blessed Peter, operates with that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer wished that His church be instructed in defining doctrine on faith and morals; and so such definitions of the Roman Pontiff from himself, but not from the consensus of the Church, are unalterable.[35]

The infallibility of the Church was not deduced from the pope, although it was declared to exist only in his communion and even in his dependence.

The results of Vatican I did not prevent the continued and increased influence of the more biblically and patristically oriented ecclesiology. Both before and after

Vatican I, Newman (1801-1890) made unique and profound contributions to this approach to the doctrine of the Church. With Möhler, Newman has been an ever-present influence upon these ecclesiological developments which became an official part of the Church's teaching only with the decrees of Vatican II.[36]

One of the central motifs in Newman's ecclesiology is that the Church must be seen as a unity or "whole," and not just from the point of view of one of its component parts. The Church is a living organism, and not a mechanical juxtaposition of individual sections. This point is developed in the lengthy Preface to the third edition of Via Media. In it, Newman opposes the view of the victorious Ultramontane proponents of Vatican I, and what he considered to be their exaggerated interpretation of the meaning of this Council.[37] He rejects the position that the Church is basically an authoritarian regime whose regulating principle is the absolute rule of the pope. In order to shed light on both the distorted quality of extreme Ultramontanism and to develop a more adequate view, Newman utilizes the framework of the three offices of the work of Christ.[38] By this procedure he is able to make two significant points. He is able to assert that the unity of the Church is ultimately found in Christ, and since His ascension, in his earthly representative, that is the Body of Christ or the Church. Although the pope is the chief part of this Body, he first of all belongs to it. Secondly, he is able to bring the kingly work of the Church back into its proper perspective by indicating how it is necessarily related to the prophetic and priestly functions of the Church.

Newman was well aware that any of these three offices of the Church could easily become isolated from the other two and consequently disproportioned. The prophetic office tends towards rationalism. The priestly office tends towards superstitution and enthusiasm. The kingly office tends towards ambition and tyranny.[39] After Vatican I and the increased predominance of extreme Ultramontanism, it was the last of these three that most disturbed Newman. The Church had become too systematized, centralized, and clericalized. The threat of life-destroying uniformity was felt both by Newman and many of his contemporaries. To counterbalance the tendencies of the three offices to become distorted, Newman calls for what might be termed a dialectic among the three offices. At the same time, and at what first seems to be a contradiction of what has just been stated, he claims that theology or the prophetic office is the regulative principle of all the dimensions of the Church.[40]

The purpose or obligation of theology or the prophetic office is to recall various aspects of the Church--its concrete governing order and worship--to the norm of revelation. Theology is meant to be a constant critic of those aspects within the Church which tend to isolation and deformity. As the contemporary "spokesman" for revelation, the prophetic office keeps the other two offices rooted in this same revelation. As we have seen, Newman was particularly interested, because of the conditions that existed in the Church at that time, in affirming that the kingly office was not autonomous. Yet, in the final analysis, the three offices must be kept in harmony. Each must be both tested and nourished by the other two.[41]

Another important part of Newman's doctrine of the Church, and one which is still bearing fruit within Roman Catholicism, is his theology of the laity. In light of the emphasis that we have seen Newman place upon the whole Church and not just the pope or the hierarchy, the fact that he gives special attention to this important subject can only be viewed as being consistent with his basic stance. Yet at the time when such consideration was hardly in vogue, Newman was clearly a pioneer in this area.[42] One indication of Newman's emphasis upon the importance of the laity was his constant concern about education. But it was in his article "On Consulting The Faithful in Matters of Doctrine," that this emphasis was most clear, for if any function of Church life was thought to properly fall within the domain of the hierarchy (and after Vatican I the question was open to discussion whether this meant only the pope or the pope and the bishops) it was the function of formulating and defining doctrine. It is small wonder that some thought Newman heretical when he suggested the laity should be consulted on matters of doctrine.

To the question of why any attention should be paid to the laity on matters of faith, he answers "because the body of the faithful is one of the witnesses to the fact of the tradition of revealed doctrine, and because their consensus through Christendom is the voice of the infallible Church."[43] Apostolic tradition manifests itself at different times by different means: bishops, scholars, rites, events, movements, etc.. And none of these possible channels should be ignored, including the consensus of the laity.[44] As an example of the importance of the consensus of the faithful on doctrinal issues, Newman points to the Arian controversy. On a matter that concerned the very foundation of the Christian faith, the laity showed a great abhorrence to the Arian heresy at the same time that some of the bishops were heterodox.

But although Newman upheld the value of consulting the laity, he was careful to precisely define what is meant by this act. He states that he does not mean it in the technical sense of to "take counsel." Rather, he says he uses the term "consult" in its popular or ordinary use. "It includes the idea of inquiring into a matter of fact, as well as asking a judgment. Thus we talk of 'consulting our barometer' about the weather--the barometer only attests the fact of the state of the atmosphere."[45] Consulting involves a certain trust and deference but not submission. The function of discerning, defining, and promulgating dogma still belongs solely to the Church's magisterium.[46]

Like Möhler, Newman recognized the problem of discerning which developments in dogma that have occured since the

Early Church are legitimate and which ones are illegitimate. In An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine, Newman's basic concern is to show that the changes that have occurred within the life and doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, in contrast to Protestantism, are not an alteration or a deformation but a genuine development of revelation.

In the process, he rejects three optional treatments of the history of the life and doctrine of the Church. The first position holds that Christianity has always changed, accommodating itself to various times and situations. Newman believed that this "hypothesis," while it does take into account the change that has occurred, fails to allow for the possibility that basic elements may have maintained their identity and endured down through the ages. As a result, it also abandons all claims for the unique and supernatural character of revelation. The second position holds that there is a normative period in history, and any subsequent movement away from this norm is one of distortion and corruption.[47] Sometimes such positions have used as support the formula of Vincent of Lerins that Apostolic doctrine is quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus.[48] But in Newman's mind this "hypothesis" does not account for the obvious changes that have occurred in the course of the history of the Church.[49] Equally unsatisfactory is the "hypothesis" that the difference between the early Church and the contemporary Church can be accounted for by upholding the existence of a type of secret oral tradition. This is rejected for the simple reason that variations continue far beyond the time when it is conceivable that such a practice could have existed.[50]

At the heart of Newman's own attempt to formulate an adequate explanation is a view of God's providence that manifests itself within history and guides it towards a goal or fulfillment. If one looks at the design of the plan of God as it is indicated in Scripture, one would expect continued development. "...The whole Bible, not its prophetical portions only, is written on the principle of development."[51] Nor if one turns to that period after the ascension can one find a point or a break at which one can say significant development stopped--and which can accordingly be defined as a permanent rule of faith.[52] Grounded in the providence of God, sacred history moves towards its end.

Revelation or the "idea" of Christianity does not itself change but the Church's apprehension and understanding of it does develop. There is a movement from implicit to explicit, but not primarily in the manner of a type of logical unfolding. Like other major living "ideas," the Gospel-idea becomes more deeply understood only as it is expressed in the concrete life of the Church in history. Its various aspects and implications only become manifest in the currents and rapids of the same history that God entered in Jesus Christ.[53] Not just theoretical reason, which for Newman is always secondary and a critical reflection upon a more personal, spontaneous, and inferential reason (the "illative sense"), is involved in development but historical events, persons, institutions, etc..[54]

Through this process, more aspects of the "idea" of Christianity are comprehended. Implicit understanding becomes explicit understanding. For this reason, one does not look for the richness and profoundity of Christianity only at its beginning, although it was already implicitly present, but at its later stages.[55] And again one observes the "presupposition" of God's providence and the way in which it "guides" history towards its goal.

It also is central for the way in which Newman handles the issue of how one can tell whether a specific form of growth is legitimate or illegitimate. Although they have a definite and valuable role, historical tests cannot solve this problem with certainty.[56] A living magisterium who is under God's direction is an imperative. Scripture is not a sufficient test because controversies arise which are not directly considered in it. An authority is needed. And Newman argues that if God saw fit to reveal himself in history to fulfill his plan, it may be correctly assumed that he has provided an infallible authority for the Church. The whole of the Christian faith is contained within Scripture (implicitly) but it must be interpreted by tradition and thus by the living magisterium. Scripture, tradition, and the Church with its living magisterium must be held together. God does not desert his people with the death of the last apostle. His guidance and presence continues with them.[57]

Thus on the matter that has continued to be central within both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism, and is certainly of utmost importance for their increased discussions with each other, namely, the role of historical method, Newman holds that it has its definite limitations. As already observed, one cannot prove by history that there is continuity between the early centuries of the Church and the contemporary Church. But beginning from revelation-faith, and by observing the plan of development of sacred history and how this entails an infallible magisterium, one can then provide a pattern by which the facts, which are in themselves incapable of providing such a pattern, becomes intelligible and meaningful. One knows what one is looking for and then goes to history to look for it. Independent historical reason and methodology is a tool which the theologian can fruitfully utilize within the circle of faith (Scripture, tradition, living magisterium) but they cannot provide the certainity for a non-believer to move into that circle.[58]

As was true with Möhler, an important factor which allowed Newman to move in a different ecclesiological direction from that of the post-Tridentine ecclesiology was that he circumvented that development, and hence achieved a different perspective from which to view it, by returning to Scripture and the Church Fathers. From these sources, he was able to put the Church in its proper Christological, eschatological, and anthropological context. In this way, he was able to make his highly significant contribution to what was earlier termed the underground biblical and patristically oriented ecclesiology that began with Möhler and was, to varying degree, continued by Perrone, Passaglia, Franzelin, and Schrader. Two other theologians who assisted this movement of growing dissatisfaction with the Bellarmine-type view were Scheeben and Pilgram.

Matthias-Joseph Scheeben (1855-1888) holds that revelation has the quality of "mystery" since it manifests truths which are beyond the capacity and scope of human reason. On this basis, he affirms that the internal nature of the Church, in contrast to its external or visible nature, must be seen as a "mystery."

> The inner nature of the Church is absolutely supernatural, as is that of the God-man. This is the reason why it is so hidden and mysterious; this is the reason why the Church, although conformable to other human societies in its outward organization, differs essentially from these in its innermost character; and this is the reason why its unity, its power, and its organization are so matchless, sublime, and inconceivable.[59]

The "mystery" of the Church is a result of its incorporation into the life of Christ. And since God became man in order to fulfill the union between Himself and His creation, the Church confers upon men a new life and unites them in itself as the Body of Christ. It is in the eucharist that this union receives its fullest and deepest expression.[60]

With this emphasis, it is not surprising that Scheeben sees the basic "role" of the hierarchy to be sacramental in nature. Carrying out a maternal function within the Church, the hierarchy is the organ and channel of divine life. It is through the maternal-sacramental hierarchy that the total Church, both clergy and laity, remains in union with Christ. The power and authority of the hierarchy and the infallibility of the pope are only truly understood when it is recognized that they exist in order to conserve and defend the sacramental or maternal functions.[61]

Another important transitional theologian, who has had a stronger influence upon contemporary treatments of the nature of the Church was F. Pilgram (1819-1890).[62] Influenced by nineteenth century criticisms, particularly Romanticism and Hegel, of the range and scope of theoretical reason, he affirms that reality can only be "grasped" by the concrete person. True knowledge, which is constituted by both a rational and a mystical-personal element, is able to penetrate the mystical unity of the spiritual and the material which is the fundamental "law" of all reality. Without God, Pilgram asserts this mystical unity in the universe would be inconceivable--and the consummation of this unity is the Church.

From this type of perspective, Pilgram rejects as inadequate a number of the traditional definitions of the Church. He holds that both the concepts "congragation of the faithful," and "instrument of salvation" do not exclude the possibility of a plurality of churches. And while the concept "mystical Body" adequately expresses the communion that exists between man and God and between individuals in Christ, it does not sufficiently underline the freedom of persons in this communion. He therefore concludes that the most adequate definition is one which is based upon the idea of Gemeinschaft (communion or community). This concept allows for both the "firmness" of relationship between man and man and man and God but it allows for the human freedom which is necessary for personal realization.

Seeing the Church as Gemeinschaft does not in any way deny its hierarchical structure. To the contrary, the divine-human character in the Church viewed as communion affirms the subordination of those who are recipients to those who are the source of the communication of the divine life. But following the earlier ecclesiology of Möhler he sees the institutional aspects of the Church as an expression or manifestation of the interior aspect.

In line with his emphasis upon the concept of communion, Pilgram also gives the primary place to holiness amongst the various marks and properties of the Church. This is obviously a quite different position from those who saw the major characteristics of the Church to be its visible unity in the pope. The Church seen as a holy communion, which we have seen is, for Pilgram, necessarily one and unique, is then made the basic for the other marks. Catholicity exists because the communion in its holiness tends by its very nature to move towards the inclusion of the entire universe. Apostolicity exists because there is an uninterrupted quality to this communion. And infallibility exists because it is required by the complete and perfect aspect of this holiness.

A very different and much more lethal kind of attack upon the Bellarmine-type view came, at the turn of the century, from Modernism. Modernism attempted to bridge the increasing gap that was separating Roman Catholic thought from the intellectual and political forces of the contemporary world. Just as Protestant Liberalism sought to do this for Protestantism, Loisy (1857-1940) and other Modernists attempted to perform a similar task for Roman Catholicism.

The basis for Loisy's understanding of the Church is contained in his famous statement: "Jesus foretold the kingdom and it was the Church that came."[63] Although this is often interpreted to mean that the establishment of the Church was a "mistake," this is not the way which Loisy meant it. In his view, Jesus saw himself as the prophet and agent of the Kingdom of God, which in turn involved the total restoration of humanity in "eternal justice and happiness."[64] But Jesus' own view of the kingdom was historically conditioned. His understanding was expressed in an eschatological framework that was provided by late Judaism.[65] Consequently there was no possible way for Jesus to reveal to his followers the future of the Church. It is futile, consequently, to try to reduce the Church to Jesus' teaching. "The identity of a man is not ensured by making him return to the cradle."[66] The essence of Jesus is to be found in what he has accomplished in the course of history.

For Loisy the main point of continuity between Jesus and the Church is that he left his disciples the view that,

> they must continue to wish, to prepare, to await and to realize the kingdom of God. The view of the kingdom has been enlarged and modified, the conception of its definite advent fills a smaller place, but the object of the gospel remains the object of the Church.[67]

Hence the transformation of Jesus and his teaching in the tradition of the Church was not a deformation or an impoverishment but an enrichment. Change was absolutely necessary if the gospel of the kingdom was to endure and progress. The Church, with its institutions and dogma, developed in order to serve the same Kingdom that Jesus had served. And like Jesus, it only prepares the way for the Kingdom. The Church in history, the Church militant, always remains only the "vestibule" of the Church Triumphant. In spite of its long history and its anticipation of a long future, the Church is still a transitional institution.[68] And in order to continue to serve the Kingdom, the Church must continue to change as it has always done.

It is on this basis that Loisy suggests that the Roman Catholic Church of his day should be reformed. The triumphant view which sees the Church primarily in terms of infallible authority and political power was necessary at one time. Now, Loisy indicates, it must see itself as a spiritual power.[69] The Church, if it will only adapt, remains the most viable agent of the Kingdom.[70]

The denunciation of Loisy and Modernism occurred in 1907 with the decree Lamentabili sane exitu, and the encyclical Pascendi Gregis. The link that Loisy left between Jesus and the Church was thought to be much too tenuous. To Rome, the implication was that the Church, its sacraments, dogma, and authority, was no longer based on the foundation of Christ. And equally threatening was the method which Loisy used, with its position that the conclusions of historical inquiry were the formal theological norm rather than the magisterium of the Church. At one point, Pascendi Gregis declares: "What then do they leave untouched in the Church, that is not to be reformed by them or according to their principles."[71] Rome was well aware of the implications and threat of this position. Accordingly, Modernism was denounced as a heresy.

In the attacks upon Modernist positions, the view of the Church as a perfect society, governed as a monarchy by the pope was assumed to be sufficient and true. Having been forced to once again draw its sword to protect itself, it was impossible for Rome to admit that any truth existed on the side of the "enemy." Because of Loisy's interest in biblical studies, the defensively oriented after-effect of the Modernist crisis greatly retarded the development of a more biblically conceived ecclesiology during the next five decades.

Nonetheless, the shift from the juridically oriented view of the Church towards ones which viewed it as a community or even more frequently as the Body of Christ continued to increase in momentum in the two decades following the First World War. This is not to suggest that the Bellarmine-type view lacked support. For in fact, these two views continued to exist side by side. And as we shall see, the Body of Christ definition and the juridical definition were even formed into a synthesis in the encyclical Mystici Corporis. But prior to the publication of this important document two other notable developments occurred. The Body of Christ concept was increasingly interpreted in its biblical framework, by such scholars as Adam, Mersch, and Cerfaux. And the motif of the Church seen as the People of God began to be more prominent in Roman Catholic ecclesiological discussion.

Gustave Weigel has stated that the point of departure for contemporary Roman Catholic ecclesiology was Karl Adam's book, The Spirit of Catholicism, which was published in 1934.[72] The central image of the Church for Adam is the Pauline one of the Body of Christ, although he also indicates that this is also the dominant image in the history of the Church's teachings, mentioning Origen, Augustine, Pseudo-Dionysius, Aquinas, and as he terms him "our own unforgettable Möhler." This book was first thought to fit into the category of homiletic piety rather than of strict ecclesiology. It will be recalled that there was a similar reaction to this concept at Vatican I.[73]

In addition to the central place given to the concept of the Church as the mystical Body of Christ, there are also several other important emphases in this seminal study, which were to move more and more from the periphery to the center of Roman Catholic theology in this century. Fundamental to the Church is its organic unity with Christ. This living organism, animated by Christ is fundamental. Dogma, worship, and "order," are primary expressions of this fundamental reality.[74] Consequently the tradition of the Church is viewed as "a unitary life-stream" stretching across the centuries.[75]

And quite significantly, dealing with the biblical material, Adam places the Church within its eschatological context. Jesus has established the Kingdom but only in an embryonic form. It is to be completed in the future. Hence the Church is fundamentally eschatological in nature. It needs a body and a structure to protect itself as it goes through the trials of history. But basically, it is "a society awaiting the parousia." In its dogma, liturgy, sacraments, and prayers, it "grasps the future in the present."[76] This means that the present condition of the Church is necessarily incomplete and imperfect. The Kingdom is only partly realized in the Church. Moving on from this perspective, he does not hesitate to speak of the sin which can mar the face of the Church. But if the eschatological viewpoint means that all the black marks of the history of the Church must be honestly admitted, it also means that one has confidence that the gate of hell will not ultimately prevail against the Church. This is a long way from seeing the Church as a perfect society. For Adam, the present Church is the Church "militant" and not the Church triumphant.[77]

The theme of the Church as community is also a dominant one in Adam. "The Church is primarily a community, it is that unity of redemption-needing mankind which is established in the person of the Incarnate God."[78] He repeatedly develops the Church's community dimension. In fact it is this theme along with the eschatological one that would seem to define or provide the context in which the concept of the mystical Body is to be interpreted. Without these other contributing factors, it would have been possible for Adam to have treated the mystical Body concept in a much more static and juridical manner. There is a great deal of difference between Adam's interpretation of this image and the way in which it is developed in Mystici Corporis.

Another influential theologian, whom we can only mention in this survey movement towards increased attention to the Church as the mystical body, was Emile Mersch. His book, The Whole Christ[79] (the original French title Le Corps Mystique du Christ is a more adequate description of its subject matter) which was first published in 1933, is a combined biblical and historical investigation of the concept of the mystical Body. He was the first one to really attempt to develop this Pauline image in its scriptural usage.

This approach was to receive further impetus, although arriving at a different conclusion, in 1942 with Lucien Cerfaux's study of the Church in St. Paul.[80] In contrast to Mersch who saw no development in Paul's ecclesiology, Cerfaux argues that there are three strands in Paul's theology of the Church. St. Paul began with the Jewish idea of Israel as the People of God. Christians are the new People of God, intimately and profoundly linked with Israel. There is an essential continuity between them. This first phase in Paul was followed by two others in which the concept Body of Christ received increased attention. It was in order to express, first, the deep unity that the various congregations or "churches" had in Christ, and, second to indicate the cosmic dimensions of the Church that Paul used this concept. Yet Cerfaux states that the fundamental idea for Paul always remained the People of God.

But interest in the concept of the People of God preceded Cerfaux's inquiry. In 1937, Congar himself had written an essay in which this theme played a major role. This is suggested by the headings of the first two sections: "The Church, People of God created by the Covenant," and "New Covenant, New People in Jesus Christ."[81] In the first section, he develops the motif that the Church was already established, in part, by the covenant that God made with Abraham and which was later renewed with Moses and David. In the second section, Congar stresses the transformation that has occurred in and through Christ of the inheritance which the Church has received. He then goes on to point to the significance of this transformation by discussing the Church as the Body of Christ.

In 1940, a much more controversial book was published which also advocated interpreting the Church as the People of God. The book was M. D. Koster's *Ekkesiologie im Werden*.[82] Writing against interpretations of the Body of Christ which treated it from a spiritual-mystical point of view which denied all distance between Christ and the individual believer and Christ and the Church, Koster argued that the image of the

Body of Christ was responsible for keeping ecclesiology in what he considered to be a pre-scientific state. "As for the 'Body of Christ', this is one name for the Church among others, and neither more nor less. It is an expression which can never be the definition of the Church."[83] In his view, this term was too metaphorical in character to allow for a strict theological definition of the Church. He then declares that it is the concept of the People of God which will allow for a truly theological treatment of the doctrine of the Church. This term has the decided advantage of indicating the continuity that exists before the two Covenants. But in general, he approaches his preferred definition from a non-biblical standpoint. The emphasis is largely juridical in character. He is concerned with drawing well-marked boundaries. One enters the People of God by baptism and takes one's place in it by confirmation and orders. These sacraments are seen as signs that give a visible structure to the Church, and which also are efficacious symbols of saving grace.[84]

The consequences of the theological debate that was set in motion by Koster's response to those who were treating the notion of the mystical Body in a strong mystical direction began to disturb those with pastoral responsibility. The Archbishop of Freiburg-im-Breisgau, Mgr. Conrad Groeber, sounded the alarm in a letter and questionaire which he sent to members of the German episcopate in January 1943. He felt that the laity were being inundated by a bogus mysticism which minimized man's part in the work of grace, and which was masked by the vague term "mystical Body." His document concluded with an appeal to the pope to intervene in the controversy. Five months later, Mystici Corporis appeared.[85]

As is true with most encyclicals, this document was primarily directed towards a particular historical situation, in this case, the controversy that has just been briefly described. It is only in a secondary way an effort to state in a condensed manner a doctrine of the Church. The encyclical explicitly warns against three dangers. The first of these, which it terms a "false mysticism," which attempts to obliterate the frontiers which exist between creation and the Creator. Such a position makes "the Divine Redeemer and the members of the Church coalesce in one physical person, and while they bestow divine attributes on man, they make Christ our Lord subject to error and to human inclination to evil."[86] "False quietism," the second, gives complete emphasis to the action of the Holy Spirit, and fails to indicate the collaborative action of man.[87] The third warning is given to those who only stress the interior aspect of the Church and neglect its external and visible aspects.[88] But if these are "dangers" that have developed in various interpretations of the concept of the mystical Body of Christ, Pius XII does not draw the same conclusion as Koster and abandon the image as central to any adequate account of the Church. To the contrary, he takes up the task of giving a doctrinally precise elaboration of this concept.

The tone and dominant direction of *Mystici Corporis* is established in the first sentence which affirms the identification of the mystical Body with the Church, by which is meant the Roman Catholic Church.[89] The pope refuses to accept what he considers to be the false dichotomies between the visible and invisible Church, the Church which is a fellowship of love and the one that is hierarchically structured, and between the presence of the Holy Spirit and the offices of pastors and teachers. Since the "One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Roman Church" is identical with the mystical Body of Jesus Christ these dichotomies do not in fact exist. The Church is visible by the very fact that it has a Body. And this Body is constituted in an organic and hierarchical manner. God does rule and watch over the Church in a hidden and invisible manner. But He also rules through the pope, the visible head of the entire Church, and through the bishops, who are heads of individual Christian communities. The laity also are seen as an important part of the organic life of the Body of Christ, because Christ--and the pope--has need of them in carrying out the work of redemption.[90]

It is clear from these affirmations that Pius XII does not hesitate to treat the concept of the mystical Body of Christ in a way which stresses its visible and juridical character. But he also declares that the body of Christ, which is the Roman Catholic Church, must also be called "mystical." From the document itself, it is not entirely clear how this term is used. Pius XII does employ it to distinguish the Body which is the Church from physical and moral bodies. In contrast to a physical body in which each part is united in such a manner that it lacks its own individual existence and in which each member exists for the good of the organism, in the mystical Body each member maintains his own personality and the Body is ordained for the good of the faithful. And in contrast to a moral body in which the only principle of unity is a common end, in the mystical Body common co-operation is not only brought about by common aspiration but through the internal principle which is the Spirit of God.[91] Beyond this one can only speak of a connotation that the term "mystical" would seem to have. It would seem to connote the unity that exists between Christ and the Holy Spirit (which is called the "soul" of the Body) and the Church, a union which thus includes both visible and invisible aspects, the latter working through the former.

From the viewpoint of the various trends that have become apparent in this survey, the most noteworthy factor about Mystici Corporis is that it marks a change in emphasis from the predominant attitude of Vatican I to describing the Church as the mystical Body of Christ. We have observed that biblical and patristic studies, along with the influence of Romanticism's high regard for "picturing" reality on organic models as it appears in men like Möhler and Pilgram, helped open the way for this change. But it would be an over-simplification to suggest that these were the only reasons. It is also obvious, as one examines Pius XII's encyclical, that this concept was well suited to asserting the identity between Christ and the Roman Catholic Church. Or to put it a slightly different way, this document was to give increased emphasis to the Holy Spirit, to the role of the laity, and to what we have termed the spiritual and inward aspect of the Church without in any way denying the major attributes of the view that stressed the visibility of the Church, seeing it as a perfect society, juridically defined, and governed by the pope.

By combining the juridical view with the mystical Body view, Mystici Corporis was an admirable synthesis. Yet significantly, it did fail to include two important themes that we have seen had begun to appear on the theological horizon within Roman Catholicism. The motif of the Church as a community is not present. The relationship between the pope and the bishops, and the hierarchy and the laity is seen to be unilateral in character, a movement from the "top" to the "bottom." Also not present are the historical and eschatological motifs that are found in those positions that were beginning to stress the concept of the Church as the People of God. Karl Adam had illustrated that these themes could be integrated with the concept of the mystical Body of Christ, but this line of direction was not assimilated into Mystici Corporis.

Yet just as the mystical Body motif continued after Vatican I and became increasingly more influential, the same was to be true with these two concepts. The decrees of Vatican

II are the most prominent witnesses to this fact. In the concluding chapter, we shall return to this subject when we discuss the relationship between Congar's and Vatican II's doctrine of the Church.

Turning to the contemporary setting of Congar's ecclesiology, the immediate context has been the so-called "New Theology."[92] There are a number of French theologians who have been connected with this "movement." The ones who have received the most attention are those who were generally thought to fall within the range of the criticisms and denunciations of Pius XII's encyclical, Humani Generis. These are usually considered to be M. D. Chenu, A. M. Dubarle, and Congar, who are Dominicans, and Henri de Lubac, Jean Danielou, Henri Bouillard, and Teilhard de Chardin, who are Jesuits. As is true with such movements as Modernism and Neo-Orthodoxy, it is not easy to always designate what the "new theologians" have in common. Gustave Weigel points to this difficulty when he states that what united them has been more of a mood than a theory.[93] We shall attempt to penetrate this mood by observing its historical background, its "program" of returning to the sources, its "openness" to history, and finally one of the controversies which precipitated Humani Generis. As already indicated, we shall particularly focus upon de Lubac and Danielou, using them as points of comparison with Congar.

Although it would take us far beyond the spheres of this study to suggest adequately the heritage of the "New

Theology" it is important, if this movement is to be understood, to at least point to some of the major persons, positions, and struggles in its French ancestry. The Gallican contribution of an abiding interest in Patristics, the continuous response to Cartesian dualism in French philosophy, the "existentialism" of Pascal, the attempts to reconcile the Church after the French Revolution with the realities of the modern world by such men as Lamennais and Lacordaire, and the Modernist crisis and its continuing shadow (Integrism) have all been important forces in the formation of the "New Theology."

Likewise, the reaction that occurred to the writings of the New Theologians through such men as M. M. Labourdette and Reginald M. Garrigou-Lagrange, and even the encyclical *Humani Generis*, must be seen as part of a continuing struggle between "progressive" and "conservative" forces within the French Church. This conflict first becomes evident after the French Revolution and has continued in various forms down to Vatican II and the present.

> Since the Revolution of 1789, French Catholics have been divided into two broad groups, in conflict one with the other.... The Catholic liberal strove to bring about a reconciliation between the Church and the society in which they lived.... They believed in liberty and could not help feeling a certain sympathy with the optimistic outlook born of the Revolution. Ranged against them were the intransigent Catholics who had a pessimistic conception of mankind and constantly stressed man's need to be subject to authority. They felt an instinctive distrust in the face of anything new and placed their trust in weighty traditional methods.[94]

This struggle affected every dimension of French Catholicism. Political concerns were just as much involved as biblical and theological ones. It can be seen as an aspect of the series of papal condemnation that occurred within a period of thirty-four years: Americanism (1892), Modernism (1907), the Sillon (1910), and Action Francaise (1926). It is reflected in the selection of such popes as Pius X and Pius XI. In both cases there were clashes in the conclave between conservatives and progressive tendencies. And these two men were selected as compromise choices.[95] It manifests itself in the dispute between the "Augustinian" position of men like Blondel and Laberthonniere against Thomists such as Gayraud. And it even appears amongst Thomists themselves, between such "strict-observance" Thomists as Garrigou-Lagrange and men like Rousselot. No sphere seemed to be immune from this enduring conflict.

To generalize, one can say that it was the conservative side that usually dominated until the third decade of this century. Only with the denunciation of Action Francaise was there a significant change in the balance of power. The Church historians Latreille and Remond term this event the "end of an epoch." Before this time, the dominant forces in French Catholicism had always been interested, both theologically and politically, in restoration, that is, in returning to the "era" and intellectual climate of the days before the French Revolution, But after the denunciation of Action Francaise there was a new desire to break away from the molds of the former ages and develop new forms. No longer was the term "revolution" feared. A new understanding was gained that the Christian faith was not identical with the pre-Revolution Church and theology.[96] Yet the conservative side did not disappear. And it continued to be listened to in Rome. It is said, for instance, that Garrigou-Lagrange enjoyed the personal favour of Pius XII.[97] Without any question, the continuing tensions between these two different approaches must be kept in mind in any considerations of the New Theology and the controversy which surrounded it.

Turning to the "New Theology" itself, one of its dominant features has been its affirmation of the need and value of returning to the sources (resourcemmnt). This conviction helped to promote the threefold movement of biblical, liturgical, and patristical renewal which has played such a major role in modern Roman Catholicism. In the case of the "New Theology," these three movements are seen as related and complementary to each other and not in any sense in opposition to one another.

The return to Scripture within Roman Catholicism has had a number of advocates and participants. Certainly one of the key figures was Marie-Joseph Lagrange (1855-1938). Throughout his career, he promoted careful critical scholarship, generally working within a very conservative climate with regards to the sphere of biblical scholarship.[98] One also has to mention again the pioneering work of Cerfaux, The Church in the Theology of St. Paul, as well as take into account the Protestant influences in this area of renewal, particularly through form criticism as developed by Martin Dibelius and Rudolf Bultmann and the Heilsgeschichte approaches of von Rad and Cullmann.

The influence of this return to Scripture has been significant in the "New Theology." It is strongly evident in such "biblical" works as Daniélou's The Lord of History and Congar's The Mystery of the Temple.[99] But more importantly it is incorporated into the total theology of those two men as well as that of de Lubac. As a result, theology has become increasingly biblical theology. When the "New Theology," as expressed by any of these three men, speaks of such matters as faith, revelation, history, and providence it does it in a biblical framework. For example, when de Lubac considers the theological foundation of missions he proceeds by rooting missions in the mission of the Church as the latter is understood in light of the meaning and direction of sacred history as expressed in the Old and New Testaments.[100]

Roman Catholic liturgical renewal in France has its origins in the nineteenth century in the work of Gueranger. It received its contemporary impetus from the Belgian Benedictine, Beauduin.[101] The central aim of the movement has been to make the liturgy of the Church the integrating force and center of the Church's whole life. Particular stress has been placed to make the laity's participation more active and meaningful. Within the context of the "New Theology," interest in the liturgy appears in a number of different forms.

Daniélou's The Bible and the Liturgy, first published in 1951, is an explicit examination of the sacramental theology.[102] De Lubac's Corpus Mysticum is an historical inquiry which traces in Medieval theology how the vital relationship which originally existed between the Eucharist and the Church was broken.[103] Prior to Berenger, the Church and the Eucharist were conceived as being intimately united. The Church was "formed" by the eucharist, and the Church in turn evoked the real eucharistic presence as its "cause." The Eucharist was seen as pointing both towards the past, to Christ's Passion, and to the future, to the building of the Church. After Berenger, this union was broken. The Eucharist was isolated and defined in terms of substance and accidents. And the Church was more and more seen, by the Medieval canonists, as an institution capable of juridical definition. It thus became possible for later theologians such as Bellarmine to discuss and define the Church without saying anything of its relation to the Eucharist.

In light of our discussion in the first section of this chapter, the ecclesiological implications of this development are obvious. And consequently it is not surprising that in his own works on the Church, de Lubac attempts to restore the shattered unity and speaks of the Church as the Sacrament of Christ.[104] In any case, it is apparent from this type of historical study that liturgical concerns have many wide and important implications for the whole of the theological enterprise.

This is also indicated in the way in which liturgical renewal expresses itself and is expressed in Congar's theology. Several of the essays in Priest and Layman deal with liturgical concerns. But much more significantly, the liturgy stands at the very center of his understanding of tradition in that he sees the eucharist as being the foremost "instrument" or "organ" for making present the living reality of the Gospel. A liturgical orientation is also operative in his view of the nature of the Church with his strong emphasis upon the total participation of the communion of the People of God in worship and mission and upon the sacramental character of the relationship between the structure and life of the Church, and between the Church and the world.

From these examples, it is evident that there is a vital connection between liturgical renewal and the theological renewal of the "New Theology." The reality of worship is at the heart of the man's response to the reality of revelation. As a result, the adherents of the New Theology do not treat it as an isolated phenomena. The reality and meaning of the sacraments, preaching, and prayer inform and are integrated into the total theological enterprise. They are considered in the full context of salvation, history, redemption, and ecclesiology.[105]

Patristical renewal in France also has its roots in the nineteenth century in the monumental collection of Migne, Patrologia Latina and Patrologia Graeca. This scholarly work was continued through a critical evaluation of the texts by such men as Morin, Planaque, de Plinval, Marrou, Courcelles, and Audet.[106] Since 1942, Daniélou and de Lubac have edited the series Sources Chretiennes, which consists of French translations of such men as Iraneaeus, Tertullian, and Gregory of Nyssa. Each of them has also written on the theology of the early Church. De Lubac has written on Origen's understanding of Scripture.[107] Daniélou has made a large number of contributions to the investigation of early Christian history, including studies of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Philo, Origen, and Gregory of Nyssa.[108] Congar has not been directly involved, as such, in patristic studies. However, the series which he has edited, Unam Sanctam, includes several works on the ecclesiology of the Fathers. And even a cursory glance at his works is sufficient to indicate his familiarity with and use of the Church Fathers.

As is true with the biblical and liturgical renewal, the New Theology's participation in patristic renewal is not motivated by any type of antiquarianism. The Fathers are seen to be highly relevant sources for contemporary theology. Their title appropriately suggests that these early theologians definitively shaped the doctrinal understanding of the Christian faith. The New Theology has held that one paradoxically does more adequate theology in the present by going back to those men who first hammered out the shape of Christian theology.

The threefold movement of resourcement had several significant consequences. It has produced a broader and deeper historical perspective. What sometimes passes for eternal tradition in the Church is often a **comparatively** recent innovation, and sometimes more shallow and less worthy to be maintained than earlier forms. If one sees the strong communal nature of worship in the Early Church, one is bound to ask whether this **"characteristic"** is receiving proper attention in contemporary worship. If one has observed the historical development of the concept of the Church as a society and in turn comes to recognize that this concept is not developed either in Scripture or the Fathers, one is going to ask whether the present understanding of the Church has not been seriously impaired by the loss of the central biblical and patristic concepts. If one notices that salvation history is the theological framework for the Church Fathers, one is going to inquire as to what happened to theology when this framework was no longer utilized. Just as knowledge of one's own individual history illuminates one's present self-understanding, so the "New Theology's" reappropriation of the major sources of the Christian faith has been seen by it as an illumination of how to fulfill its contemporary calling to faithfully interpret the Word of God.

There are two other consequences which characterize the New Theology on account of its adoption of a program of resourcement. Both are dependent upon the increase of historical perspective. The deeper awareness of the history of the Church has meant that the "new theologians" have affirmed that the Christian faith cannot be permanently identified with a particular constellation of forms. The essence of the Gospel is always expressed within a certain set of forms. One cannot discover the Gospel apart from particular historical settings. But neither can it ever be completely identified with them. As history changes, so does the setting of the Gospel. Below, it shall be seen that this aspect of the New Theology led to the claim of its opponents that it had fallen into historicism.

The other closely related consequence of a wider historical perspective is that it has allowed the "new theologians" to develop a hierarchy of values. By returning to the sources, they hold that they are returning to that which always remains the origin of the Church's faith, and thus to the origin, that is, Christ. By this act they not only aim to distinguish more sharply between the Gospel and the multiplicity of forms that have been used to express the Gospel but also to suggest that some parts of the Christian heritage are more important than others. Not every development is equal in value. The infallibility of the Church assures that in every age the faith will be preserved. But at the same time, false steps are taken. Misunderstandings occur. Hence the "new theologians" do not automatically set a standard price or value, to use a not very satisfactory metaphor, for all the history of the Church. In light of the renewed understanding of the "essence" of the faith that is gained through resourcement one must historically examine and judge each form and determine its value.

The second dominant feature of the New Theology is what might be termed its openness to history, and particularly to the world outside of Roman Catholicism. In the first part of this section it was pointed out that since the French Revolution there had been a struggle between conservative and progressive forces within French Roman Catholicism. And it was indicated that the "New Theology" stands clearly on the side of the latter. For the conservatives, the Church is bounded by a wall. The outside world, one of momentous intellectual and political transformations, is seen as being covered by falsehood and darkness. Minimally it is the task of the Church to protect itself from the threats of the world. Philosophical and theological positions outside of the Church are not to be seriously considered. The Church only acknowledges them in order to point out their falsity and to denounce them.

The progressive side as represented by the "New Theology," is not interested in the isolation of walls. For the "New Theology" the latter position wrongly suggests that God is only active on one side of the wall. It forgets that the whole thrust of the Gospel is toward the reconciliation of the world. It also sometimes mistakes what in fact are aspects of a former "world" for what it thinks to be the pure Gospel. In contrast, the adherents of the "New Theology" affirm the value of an openness to the world. Such an openness means that the Church cannot adequately deal with non-Roman Catholic points of view simply by denouncing them. The open theology must know them. It must deal with the questions which they are trying to answer. It must be willing to listen to criticisms of "outsiders" and see whether they are accurate. An open theology is uneasy with any suggestion that the Church, even though it is eternally founded on the Truth, presently possesses all of that Truth. Openness implies that one must be alert to the possibility that the Truth is also manifested in other areas. It implies that the Church of any given period is always limited by the sin and short-sidedness of its members. If the Church in one sense is always based on the Truth, in another sense it must always seek that Truth. An open theology recognizes that the Church is always falling short of its calling and that consequently resourcement, renewal, and reform are always a necessity.

The feature of "openness" in the New Theology appears in both de Lubac and Daniélou although in somewhat different ways, as determined by their own individual interests and approaches. With de Lubac it is possible to examine this feature from a number of different perspectives. One expression of it is found in a work he wrote on Nietzsche, Feuerbach, and Comte and in another one on Proudhon.[109] In these he actively reflects on the "problem" of man and of God as it has been presented by these "revolutionary" thinkers of the last century and the early part of this one.

In the former work, for example, he inquires why Christianity, which is meant to free mankind from the enslaving forces of nature and history, was seen by these profound minds to be an obstacle against that very liberation. Feuerbach replaced God with humanity, Nietzsche replaced Him with an emerging superman, and Comte replaced Him with a religion of humanity and common sense. But these systems rather than achieving their goal to free man from alienating illusions end by imprisoning him. Their various attempts to establish a true or authentic humanism all end by becoming inhuman. The world which they envision is one which crushes the essential dignity of the individual. There is no true humanism which is not rooted in the reality of God. Hence de Lubac contrasts Kierkegaard and Dostoevski, two modern upholders of theistic humanism, to these adherents of atheistic humanism.

Throughout this work the marks of openness are evident. De Lubac sympathetically examines the position of those who have been so influential in the formation of major dimensions of the contemporary intellectual world; he points to their valid desire for a true humanism although he argues that they fail in their task; in opposition to their position he presents the thought of two men who stand outside of Roman Catholicism.

Daniélou also suggests the need for contemporary Roman Catholic theology to be "at home" in the thought of such men as Nietzsche and Dostoevski.[110] And as with de Lubac one could approach the feature of openness in Daniélou from several different angles. But certainly one of the most representative examples is his attitude towards non-Christian religions.

Daniélou affirms what he terms the concept of a "cosmic revelation."[111] By this, he does not mean the type of primitive revelation which was made to the first men and then handed down to later generations by tradition--a position held by Lamennais and others. Rather he means God's revelation through nature, which corresponds to the first covenant. Through it man universally comes to know, in however an obscure manner, the providence of God.[112] The covenant with Abraham, that is with the Israelites, was both a fulfillment and a supplanting of the first, or cosmic, covenant made with Noah. In the plan of God there is both continuity and discontinuity between earlier and later stages. The later is both a flowering of and the death of the earlier. Daniélou suggests that this was the position of such Church Fathers as Clement and Irenaeus towards the pagans of their day and that it is this view which indicates for contemporary theology the way of approaching non-Christian religions.[113]

There is a continuity between non-Christian religions and Christianity because amidst all the revolutions and tragedies of history there is a certain maturing. The Word of God is at work in the world, carrying out God's plan that all nations will one day be united in the kingdom--and because it is God's plan, it is one which will not fail. It is on the basis of God's providence, particularly as expressed in his "cosmic revelation," that the Christian affirms that contemporary pagan religions contain authentic values. For Daniélou, Barth is wrong to see them worshiping an idol forged by man.[114] Although contaminated by sin, a marred and diffused knowledge of the true God is possible. In the sense that Christianity is the fulfillment of the divine plan, other religions are outmoded rather than false. They are anachronistic. All that is good in them is contained in the new--first in the covenant with the Israelites and then definitively in Christ.[115]

But there is also a rejection on the part of Christianity of all other religions. Because their values are present in Christianity, their opposition to being superseded is rooted in sin, that is in active opposition to God's grace. They refuse to renounce what once was appropriate but is now radically outdated. They want the new wine in the old wine skins. But this is impossible. The always-new character of the Gospel does not fit into the old religious frameworks. Renunciation is necessary.[116] God has given man in Christ the opportunity to enter a new mode of existence. What is outdated and false in the old must be left behind.

As was true with the "example" that was used from de Lubac, one obvious aspect of openness is the choice of subject. Daniélou ventures into the vast dimensions and complexities of non-Christian religions. There is no provinciality of outlook here. There is no fear that entering into dialogue will result in the loss of his own position which supports the uniqueness and absoluteness of God's revelation in Christ. In fact, for Daniélou, the very meaning of that event is seriously diminished by not considering its relationship to the total movement of history.

But an even more important indication of openness in this aspect of Daniélou's thought is his affirmation that positive values exist outside the visible boundaries of Christianity, and more significantly, of the Roman Catholic Church. If other religions remain attached to outdated covenants, they still have authentic elements since all of the covenants are based on the eternal will of God. Developing a more historically oriented variation on the Catholic theme on the capacity of natural reason to know that God exists, Daniélou affirms that positive values exist outside both the covenant with the Israelites and the New Covenant established by Christ. Christianity has always been willing to baptize pagans, along with their religion and culture. While baptism involves the death of the old self it also involves a certain affirmation of the old self. And although they can not be pursued here, Daniélou is quick to indicate the implications of this openness with regards to missions and to the type of false latinization that Western Christianity has too frequently tried to impose upon the remainder of the world.

Although in the subsequent analysis of Congar's ecclesiology the feature of openness will appear in a number of different contexts, there is no question that its most central manisfestation is in the ecumenical thrust of his ecclesiology. The stream of official Roman Catholic theology moved from outright rejection of the Ecumenical Movement in Pius XI's 1928 encyclical, Mortalium animos to the Instruction of the Holy Office, Ecclesia Catholica, in 1949, which acknowledged that the grace of God is at work within the Ecumenical Movement but still held that the only path to true union is pne of return to Rome and warned against what it called "false irenicism."[117] Moving considerably ahead of this stream, Congar advocated a new type of relationship to ecumenism.

A dominant quality of this relationship is "openness." As we shall later see in detail, Congar holds that positive elements of the faith are present in Christians communions outside of the Roman Catholic Church, and that Eastern Orthodox and Protestant churches will not just return to Rome but will make their own unique and authentic contributions which are a valid part of the Catholic faith but which have not been sufficiently developed within the Roman Catholic Church. And most importantly, the Roman Catholic Church must remain open to the continuing "unfolding" of God's plan. The Church must not irrevocably wrap itself in the form or style of any particular era. It must be ready to march forward in the manner in which God commands.

Turning to the final approach in our attempt to penetrate the "mood" of the "New Theology," we shall examine one of the controversies which precipitated the encyclical *Humani Generis*. Looking back at that period between the end of World War II and 1950 from the point of view of this encyclical, one can see Pius XII reacting to a host of positions. There is continued concern about certain ecumenical efforts, and false irenicism is again mentioned. Possibly the Una Sancta movement in Germany was thought to fit into this category, although the encyclical itself mentions no specific names or movements.[118] There is no question that Congar was one of those being addressed on this matter. He has himself explicitly affirmed this to be the case.[119]

It is also generally thought that some of the evolutionary views of Teilhard de Chardin were the subject of criticism. In addition the encyclical comments on the heated controversy that was precipitated by de Lubac's Le Surnaturel which was published in 1946.[120] The issue was over the relationship between the natural and supernatural orders. De Lubac attacked the position which was an accepted part of mainline Roman Catholic theology, namely, that there is a purely natural end for man, apart from the supernatural end which is the free gift of God. Arguing that such a position ends by seeing the natural and supernatural orders as essentially unrelated, de Lubac supports the position that man has a natural desire for God--and that this is the position of St. Thomas. The only possible end that God could have intended for man is the bliss flowing from an intuitive vision of himself. The response to this book was sizeable, and the vast majority of it was in opposition to de Lubac.[121]

But the controversy that was most centrally linked to the whole program of resourcement and to the feature of openness was the issue of the development of dogma. In 1944, Henri Bouillard distinguished between what he termed the unchangeable "affirmations" and the changeable "representations" of truth.[122] Theology always has to express the truth by using the conceptual tools that are available in its own particular era. As a result, all concepts or representations are historically conditioned. The content is never permanently tied to a particular formulation. Truth does not change. Only the forms change. There is a relativity with regard to the latter but not with regard to the former. This means that although thought forms are always "time-bound" that normative truth remains. However, Bouillard does go so far as to suggest that an irrelevant theology, that is, one which has become fossilized in unintelligible forms of the past, is a false theology. Theology must change in order that it can be a living reality in the contemporary world. For example, Bouillard says that St. Thomas' great achievement was to make theology relevant to his age through the use of Aristotelian categories. But Bouillard also raises the question whether a pre-Christian metaphysic can provide categories which are adequate to describe the uniquely Christian reality of grace. This in turn raises the larger issue that has been mentioned, namely whether Christian theology must remain a prisoner to Aristotelianism as it was utilized, in a "baptized" form, by St. Thomas.[123]

One of the most eminent critics of the New Theology responded. Garrigou-Lagrange argued that Bouillard's position was based on a false understanding of truth.[124] He indicates that it follows Blondel's substitution of the definition *conformitas mentis et vitae* for *adaequatio rei et intellectus*.[125] Hence theology becomes an intellectual expression of life or religious experience rather than a representation of reality. To his question "Where is the New Theology going?" he answers "Modernism."[126] By moving to a different understanding of truth, Garrigou-Lagrange is convinced that the New Theology ends in thorough-going relativism.

The controversy continued. Daniélou wrote an article in which he indicated the need for a relevant theology which is capable of addressing the questions and problems of contemporary man.[127] He sets forth a "program" of the type that one would expect, that is one which brings together contemporary modes of thought with the sources of the Christian faith. Theology must understand the significance of such movements as Marxism and Existentialism. It must also return to Scripture, the Church Fathers, and the liturgy. Through this dual process, theology will then be able to address the concrete problems which confront man. For instance, Marxism indicates the importance of history for modern man. But its concept of the inevitability of historical progress is inadequate. An adequate view of history is found in the Fathers, who understand both the tragedies and setbacks of history, which grow out of the freedom of man, and also the underlying plan of God which will reach its goal and which is the only grounds of a true optimism.

Again an opponent responded. Labourdette pointed to what he considered to be the danger of relativism in *resourcement*.[128] He accused Daniélou of propounding the Fathers because they supplied a certain fluidity of language which had been outdated by the strictly theological structure which Thomism has provided. The inherent relativism in this process received further confirmation, in Labourdette's mind, by the fact that Danielou advocated a certain "openness" to modern errors.

The result of this new confrontation between conservative and progressive theological approaches was the papal encyclical Humani Generis, which appeared in 1950. Beside the issues involved in the various controversies, a number of other factors contributed to the tension which prevailed during this time. As already suggested, Garrigou-Lagrange had a great deal of influence in Rome. The death of Cardinal Suhard, who had long been the able spokesman and representative at the Vatican for the French, left the French advocates of the New Theology in a more vulnerable position. The worker-priest movement, with which Chenu and Congar were connected, was more and more coming under the scrutiny of Rome. There was also the "revelation" that unpublished documents were being distributed in theological circles. It is a well-known fact that some of the writings of Teilhard de Chardin were circulated in this manner.[129] The same was true with M. D. Chenu's A School of Theology.[130] There may well have been others. Garrigou-Lagrange speaks of a theological underground that had existed in France since 1934.[131] Apparently someone had sent copies of at least some of these mimeographed manuscripts to him in Rome. And Humani Generis itself states that while the "new theologians" are usually cautious in their published works that "they express themselves more openly in their writings intended for private circulation and in conferences and lectures."[132] Recognizing the fact that Modernism was often considered to be a type of conspiracy, and that there was in turn a secret society of Integrists that was organized for the purpose of "smoking-out" or detecting Modernists and which existed at least until the denunciation of Action Francaise, one can readily understand the strong undercurrents of attitude and feeling that were a part of the French theological milieu at the time Humani Generis was issued.[133]

Describing the period between the beginning of 1947 to the end of 1956, Congar writes: "I knew nothing...but an uninterrupted series of denunciations, warnings, restrictive or discriminatory measures and mistrustful interventions."[134] It was a time not only of burning theological controversy but of fundamental suspicion.

Humani Generis itself consists of a number of broad attacks upon errors that were found in certain contemporary theologies. It begins by warning against those philosophies, such as certain views of evolution, existentialism, and historicism, which end by destroying all absolutes through neglecting consideration of "immutable essences."[135] And, as we have observed, it warns once again about the danger of false irenicism.[136] In response to the issue of whether there should be change with regard to the forms of doctrine the encyclical is somewhat equivocal. It does affirm that traditional forms can be refined and improved. It also admits that it is possible to use more relevant forms.

> ...Even in these fundamental questions, we may clothe our philosophy in a more convenient and richer dress, make it more vigorous with a more effective terminology, divest it of certain scholastic aids found less useful, prudently enrich it with the fruits of progress of the human mind.[137]

However, the stronger note would seem to be a denial of the type of position that we saw advocated by Bouillard and Daniélou, and the New Theology in general. It rejects the position of those who

> "want to reduce to a minimum the meaning of dogmas; and to free dogma itself from terminology long established in the Church and from philosophical concepts held by Catholic teachers, to bring about a return in the explanation of Catholic doctrine to the way of speaking used in Holy Scripture and by the Fathers of the Church."[138]

Likewise it rejects the desire of these same theologians to put doctrine in the forms of contemporary philosophy because they wrongly hold that "the mysteries of faith are never expressed by truly adequate concepts but only by approximate and ever changeable notions, in which the truth is to some extent expressed, but is necessarily distorted."[139] Such a position, from the viewpoint of the encyclical, leads to relativism. In addition, it reaffirms Thomism as the philosophia perennis.[140]

In defense of advocates of the New Theology it is obvious that some parts of their thought are combined with an element which they did not hold. Neither Bouillard nor Daniélou advocated a reduction of the meaning of dogmas. They did uphold the need and value of its changing forms. And although the encyclical has two favorable comments on the change of dogmatic forms, it basically seems to reject the intent of the New Theology to find more relevant ways to express the Gospel to contemporary man through the double process of returning to the sources of faith and expressing this faith in a modern conceptual framework.

In apparent reference to the controversy that developed over de Lubac's study on the relationship between the natural and supernatural orders, Humani Generis upholds the gratuity of the supernatural order and the existence of a purely natural order. Again, it is clear that de Lubac never intended to deny the former, but apparently Pius XII felt the rejection of a purely natural end for man also meant the rejection of the gratuity of grace.[141]

And on a question that is directly related to the whole project of resourcement, namely the scope of historical inquiry in determining the validity of particular dogmas or dogmatic formulations, the encyclical indicates that historical method is not on a par with positive theology, because the latter has been given the living magisterium to elucidate and explain the deposit of faith.[142] The advocates of the New Theology did not question the authority and responsibility of the magisterium. Modernism had advocated the supremacy of historical criticism over the dogmatic decisions of the hierarchy. The New Theology did not make this claim. But it is obvious that it has held that there is great value in historical inquiry into the foundations of the Christian faith, and that the *magisterium* cannot act in an independent manner of Scripture and tradition of the Church. The decisive issue is over the proper relationship between historical research and positive theology. This issue certainly was not solved by the encyclical. And like a number of the other points that were dealt with in this document this issue has continued to reappear.

Although it would take us beyond the boundaries of our present task to discuss in detail how *Humani Generis* compares with the denunciation of Modernism in *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*, it is worth one essential difference. The latter could see nothing but pure falsehood with regard to Modernism. *Humani Generis*, in contrast, is much more temperate in character. It does not question the religious or moral motivations of those who hold false or dangerous positions. And it admits the possibility that even a basically erroneous position may contain certain elements of truth.[143]

Whatever the intent of *Humani Generis*, it is clear that it did not bring an end to the New Theology. The result of *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* has been compared to the explosion of an atomic mushroom cloud, and consequently it is impossible to estimate how much good was killed alongside dangerous errors.[144] One can only guess that the amount of intellectual sterilization caused by this encyclical was considerable. The ensuing theological environment was quite restrictive and often stultifying. The cloud that moved over the New Theology was not the result of an atomic explosion. It caused darkness. But it was to pass away without having irrevocably damaged the features of resourcement and openness of the "New Theology."

This is not to suggest, however, that the work of individual theologians was not impaired by the issuing of Humani Generis. De Lubac lost his teaching post and his writings came under increased "censorship."[145] Congar's writing and his ecumenical activity were also severely restricted. Indeed, if Congar can be taken as typical, one would have to say that as long as the cloud was overhead men such as Congar suffered not only restrictions upon their theological pursuits, but they also spiritually suffered. Still living in a state of oppressive darkness in 1955, Congar recalls part of this experience in the following manner:

> The pages, on which I made notes of the situation at the time, frequently bear the subtitle: Et Lazarus similiter mala (Luke 16:25) ('Lazarus likewise underwent misfortune'). Certainly, for many years I had nothing but vexations. I recognized, however, that I could say with equal truth that I had been nothing but a nuisance to my superiors. Both are true, but it was certainly not from any desire to pester or gainsay my superiors that I had become the cause of so much annoyance to them....I only succeeded in overcoming all this, both spiritually and at the level of ordinary human sanity, by complete resignation to the cross and to reduction to insignificance. The following sentence from Rilke, to which I had been introduced by a Norwegian colleague, brought me a ray of light: one must have patience, says Rilke, 'until the difficult becomes quite intolerable; then it changes and if it is difficult to this extent, it is because it is true.'[146]

Any history of the period between Humani Generis and Vatican II which seeks to present a balanced view will have to take into account not only that the cloud passed away and that probably little irreparable damage was caused, but that it was also a time of suffering.

In 1958 Walther von Loewenich, a Protestant theologian, commented upon the "facts" of the "New Theology" as he perceived it at that time.

> Wherever the belief is held that there is an infallible teaching office, there can be no place for any new theology. The chapter on the New Theology ends on the same tragic note as the chapter on Modernism. Or should we say that neither chapter is closed yet? We may certainly hope--for our own Churches', no less than for the Church of Rome's sake--that this question will not come to rest.[147]

Without presently entering into the question of how the "New Theology" influenced Vatican II and in what ways, if any, the "New Theology" is connected with Modernism, it is fair to say that few, if any, would have predicted at that time how "alive" the "New Theology" would soon be, both for the sake of "our own Churches" and for "the Church of Rome."

In light of our overview of modern Roman Catholic ecclesiology and our inquiry into the major characteristics of the "New Theology," we are in a position in which we can productively turn to an examination of Congar's doctrine of the Church. In broad strokes, the background and setting have been drawn. We now can more adequately focus upon our main "subject," beginning with an explication of how sacred or salvation history provides the framework for Congar of all aspects of his understanding of the Church.

Notes to Chapter I

[1] Yves Congar, O.P. was born on April 13, 1904 in Sedan, France. He has commented that as a child and youth he had a number of Protestant and Jewish friends and companions. Looking back, he believes that this was a time of preparation for his "ecumenical vocation." He recounts that when he was thirteen or fourteen he used to enter into theological discussions with one of the sons of the local Protestant pastor. (Yves Congar, O.P., *Dialogue Between Christians*, trans. by Philip Loretz, S. J. [London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966], p. 4.) And when the Roman Catholic parish church was deliberately set on fire by the Uhlans in 1914, the Protestant pastor offered the cure the use of a little Protestant chapel. For the next six years Congar worshipped in this place. (*Ibid*.)

For three years he attended the Institut Catholique in Paris. One of the scholars with whom he studied was Jacques Maritain. Congar became a Dominican and was ordained in 1930. He had received further preparation at Le Saulchoir, the Dominican House of Philosophy and Theology which at that time was in Belgium--since 1937 it has been in Etiolles, France. The one teacher at Le Saulchoir that he mentions in his autobiographical statement is M. D. Chenu. He describes him as "an incomparable inspiration to a whole generation of young Dominicans." (*Ibid*., p. 3.) Before Congar began teaching at Le Saulchoir in 1931, he spent six further months at the Institut Catholique. Amongst others, he studied with G. LeBras and E. Gilson. He also took some courses at the Protestant Faculty of Theology. During this period, he became acquainted with members of a French-Russian circle. The most famous figure in the group was Nicolas Berdyaev. This circle was frequented by such people as Jacques Maritain and Emmanuel Mounier. It was in this context that Congar also first met Abbe A. Gratieux, who was an advocate of the theology of Khomiakov. Except for the war years, during which Congar was mobilized and then taken prisoner, he served as Professor of Fundamental Theology and Ecclesiology at Le Saulchoir from 1931 to 1954. In 1935, he founded the influential series *Unam Sanctam*. He has also been involved in the direction of *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Theologiques*, as well as a frequent contributor to numerous other periodicals.

Congar was theologically connected with the worker-priest movement. James M. Connolly has suggested in *The Voices of France* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1961), pp. 177-78, that many of the worker-priests looked upon Congar as "their" theologian. Friedrich Heer in "The Priest-Workers in France," *Cross Currents*, IV (Spring-Summer, 1954), pp. 272-73, states that the French Dominicans were frontline fighters in this movement, and he gives particular mention to Congar. There is no question that his work *Vraie et fausse reforme dans l'Eglise*, Unam Sanctam, Vol. XX (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1950), in which he analyzes the differences between reformers within the Church and revolutionaries, was directed towards helping the Church see the reform movements in France in the proper perspective. It is also clear that in 1954 when the worker-priest movement was severely restricted by Rome, that Congar, along with Chenu and other French Dominicans, was "disciplined" by his Father General. However, I am not certain whether his connection with this movement also had a closer or more practical dimension. In relation to the "disciplining," Congar first went to Jerusalem. Then he was called to Rome and sent to England for almost a year. Upon his return in 1955, he was assigned as director of the Dominican monastery at Strasbourg. (*Ibid*., p. 43.)

He attended Vatican II where he served as a member of the Theological Commission, and as theological adviser to Archbishop Joseph Weber, Bishop of Strasbourg. (Henri Fesquet, *The Drama of Vatican II*, trans. by Bernard Murchand. [New York: Random House, 1967], p. 39.) During one period of the Council it was rumored that Cardinal Antoniutti, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Religious, sent a letter to the superiors general of religious orders warning them against twelve theological "experts," including Congar, Rahner, Küng, and Ratzinger. (*Ibid*., p. 197) Fesquet has commented that this incident indicates the distance that existed between some members of the Curia and Pope Paul VI. For at the same time this rumor was circulating, the Pope said in a private audience that Congar was one of the theologians who most contributed to the preparation of Vatican II and whose thought was most respected by the Church Fathers. (*Ibid*.) Robert McAfee Brown, reporting on what I presume to be the same audience, gives a slightly different version of what the Pope said. Brown states that the Pope told the French Ambassador that Congar was the theologian who had the most influence on him. (*Observer in Rome* [Garden City; New York: Doubleday and Company, 1964], p. 155.)

There is no question that the strand in his life which links together the various parts of his career is his "ecumenical vocation." Already before his ordination, he was conscious that this would be the major thrust of his life. (*Dialogue Between Christians*, p. 2.) Not only his writings, but his time and travels have been given to the cause of Church unity. He even suggests that he made every effort to become as respected a theologian as possible in order that the authority of this prestige might be used to support ecumenism. (*Ibid*., p. 11.) His encounters with other theologians take one right to the heart of European interests in the ecumenical movement. They include Eastern Orthodox and Protestants, as well as fellow Roman Catholics. Berdyaev and Gratieux have already been mentioned. Some of the others are Canon H. Hemmer and Dr. Kidd, who participated in the Malines Conversations, Dom Lambert Beauduin, Dom Clément Lialine, Abbe Paul Couturier, Dr. Michael Ramsay, Dr. Oliver Tomkins, Roger Schütz and Max Thurian, Pere Dumont, Visser't Hooft, and Karl Barth. Congar describes these encounters in some detail in his autobiographical statement.

It is also to these pages that one must turn to get a first-hand understanding of the courage with which Congar has pursued his vocation, often in circumstances that were heavily restrictive and even repressive. It was his strong conviction that Roman Catholicism should move away from its defensive reaction to ecumenism into a position of dialogue. This conviction, along with his involvement in the worker-priest movement, made him suspect in the eyes of Rome. As we shall briefly see later in the chapter, it was only patience, that is, a confidence that God's will cannot in the long run be defeated, that permitted him to overcome the numerous obstacles that were put in his way. The passages on his "trials" during this period are quite moving. And if I am correct in concluding from his writings that Congar is quite self-effacing, one would have to assume that they are understated rather than overstated. But perhaps this is part of what gives them their power. In any case, it is only in light of his many discouragements and setbacks that one can fully appreciate his statement that tears came to his eyes when he first met the Protestant and Orthodox observers at Vatican II. (Yves Congar, O.P., Report from Rome, trans. by A. Manson /London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1963/, I, p. 31.)

[2] Yves Congar, O.P., quoted in P. Stanislas Jáki, O.S.B., Les tendances nouvelles de l'ecclesiologie (Rome: Herder, 1957), p. 7.

[3] Yves Congar, O.P., The Mystery of the Church, trans. by A. V. Littledale (2nd rev. ed., Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1965), p. 74.

[4] Ibid., p. 73.

[5] This is the position that Gustave Weigel, S.J. takes in "Catholic Ecclesiology in our Time," in Christianity Divided, ed. by Daniel J. Callahan, Heiko A. Oberman, Daniel J. O'Hanlon, S.J. (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1961), p. 178.

[6] Jáki, Les tendances nouvelles de l'ecclésiologie, p. 7.

[7] Yves Congar, Dialogue Between Christians, pp. 345-47.

[8] Quoted in Jerome Hamer, O.P., The Church is a Communion, trans. by Ronald Matthews (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1964), p. 84.

[9] Jerome Hamer, O.P., The Church is a Communion, trans. by Ronald Matthews (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1964), p. 84.

[10] Reinhold Seeberg, Textbook of the History of Doctrine, trans. by Charles Hay (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1956), II, p. 452.

[11] Yves Conger, O.P., *Lay People in the Church*, trans. by Donald Attwater (Rev. ed., London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1965), p. 44. Jáki, *Les tendances nouvelles de l'ecclésiologie*, pp. 10-11.

[12] Hans Küng, *The Church*, trans. by Ray and Rosaleen Ockenden (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1967), p. 11.

[13] Roger Aubert, "Géographie Ecclésiologique au XIX^e^ siècle," in *L'Ecclésiologie au XIX^e^ siècle*, ed. by M. Nedoncelle (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1960), p. 25.

[14] Aubert, "Géographie ecclésiologique au XIX^e^ siècle," pp. 26-27. Jáki, *Les tendances nouvelles de l'ecclésiologie*, pp. 22-23. Peter Riga, "The Ecclesiology of Johann Adam Möhler," *Theological Studies*, XXII (1961), pp. 570-72.

[15] Aubert, "Géographie ecclésiologie au XIX^e^ siècle," p. 27.

[16] Hervé Savon, *Johann Adam Möhler: The Father of Modern Theology*, trans. by Charles McGrath, Deus Books (Glen Rock, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1966.).

[17] Möhler appears in almost every aspect of Congar's thought. Congar also played a major part in introducing Möhler to contemporary French theology by deciding to have Möhler's *Die Einheit in der Kirche...*, translated into French and included in the *Unam Sanctam* series. "I wanted to open the series with a new translation of *Die Einheit* by J. A. Möhler. This masterpiece, imperfect like so many masterpieces, nevertheless represented remarkably well the character and the spirit of the sort of material I hoped to supply. Unfortunately there was some delay with the translation, which I had to revise later from end to end. Möhler had to take second place and I brought out *Chrétiens désunis. Principes d'un Oecumenisme catholique* as the first volume in the series." (Congar, *Dialogue Between Christians*, p. 24.) In addition, Congar wrote, particularly in the years that immediately preceded and followed the publication of the translation of *Die Einheit*, a number of articles relating to different aspects of Möhler's theology.

[18] "Before the coming of Christ, the Spirit which formed, animated and held together in one body all those who believed, came down but rarely and only on individuals living widely apart. For that reason, there was no possibility of a common religious and spiritual life; what life there was showed itself only in sporadic and exceptional manifestations. It was only after the spectacular and miraculous descent of this same spirit of God on the apostles and on the whole Christian community that this latter began to live truly as such. From that time the Spirit was never to leave the believers; he had

not to return, since he was eternally present. The gathering of all the faithful, that is to say the Church, has now become, through the formation by the Holy Spirit, the inexhaustible treasure, the source of ever flowing, the youth always renewing itself, the new principle of life, and offers to all an abundant sustenance." (Die Einheit, Sect. 2, quoted in Congar, The Mystery of the Church, p.203.) In 1832 Möhler published a second work on the Church, Symbolism or Exposition of the Doctrinal Differences between Catholics and Protestants as evidenced by their Symbolical Writings, (Trans. by James Burton Robertson [New York: Charles Scribner's Son, 1894].) In it, there is a much stronger Christocentric emphasis. And as a result, more stress is placed upon the Church as having been instituted by Christ. This in turn meant that more emphasis is placed upon the visible aspects, the sacraments and the hierarchy, of the Church. "By the Church on earth, Catholics understand the visible community of believers, founded by Christ, in which, by means of an enduring apostleship, established by him, and appointed to conduct all nations, in the course of ages, back to God, the works wrought by him during his earthly life, for the redemption and sanctification of mankind, are, under the guidance of his spirit, continued to the end of the world." (Symbolism, p. 259.)

[19] "No more beautiful object presents itself to the imagination of the Catholic--none more agreeably captivates his feelings, than the image of the harmonious inter-working of countless spirits, who, though scattered over the globe endowed with freedom and possessing the power to strike off into every deviation to the right or to the left; yet, preserving still their various peculiarities, constitute one great brotherhood for the advancement of each other's spiritual existence--representing one idea, that of the reconciliation of men with God, who on that account have been reconciled with one another, and are become one body. (Eph. iv, 11-16)." (J. A. Möhler, Symbolism, p. 263.)

[20] Ibid., p. 262.

[21] Ibid., pp. 306-10.

[22] "Faith, or Christian knowledge, and the love which generates the Christian community, are simply inseparable. Where through the working of the Holy Ghost faith is developing, the same divine force manifests itself by uniting the faithful. On the other hand, where the faithful are united the same faith is reigning.... Just as historically we know nothing about Christ without the Church, so we learn to know Him in ourselves only through the Church and in the Church. The more we absorb the divine force proceeding therefrom, the more our faith in the divinity of Jesus Christ and what He is and must be for us becomes complete." (J. A. Möhler, L'unité dans l'Eglise, trans. by Dom André de Lilienfeld, O.S.B., Unam Sanctam, Vol. 2, [Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1938], pp. 20-21.)

[23] "The Church is the body of the Lord: it is, in its universality, his visible form--his permanent, ever-renovated, humanity--his eternal revelation. He dwells in the community; all his promises, all his gifts are bequeathed to the community--but to no individual, as such, since the time of the apostles. This general sense, this ecclesiastical consciousness is tradition, in the subjective sense of the word. What then is tradition? The peculiar Christian sense existing in the Church, and transmitted by ecclesiastical education; yet this sense is not to be conceived as detached from its subject-matter--nay, it is formed in, and by this matter, so it may be called a full sense. Tradition is the living word, perpetuated in the hearts of the believers. To this sense, as the general sense, the interpretation of Holy Writ is entrusted. The declaration which it pronounces on any controverted subject, is the judgment of the Church; and, therefore, the Church is judge in matters of faith (judex controversiarum). Tradition, in the objective sense, is the general faith of the Church through all ages, manifested by outward historical testimonies; in this sense, tradition is usually termed the norma--the standard of Scriptural interpretation--the rule of faith." (Möhler, Symbolism, pp. 280-281.)

[24] "The individual, at best, could only hazard the assertion, this is my view, my interpretation of Scripture, or in other words, without tradition there would be no doctrine of the Church, and no Church, but individual Christians only; no certainty and security, but only doubt and probability." (Ibid., p. 285.)

[25] "But, after the Divine Word had become human faith, it must be subject to all mere human destinies. It must be constantly received by all the energies of the human mind, and imbibed by the same. The preservation and communication of the Word were, in like manner, attached to a human method. Even with the Evangelists, who only wished to recount what Christ had spoken. wrought, and suffered, the Divine Word appears subject to the law here described; a law which manifests itself in the choice and arrangement of the matter, as well as in the special plan, which each proposed to himself, and in the general conception and execution of his task. But the Divine Word became still more subject to this law, when the Apostles were fulfilling their mission--executing the divine charge, which they had received; for various questions of dispute arose, the settlement whereof could not be avoided, and on that account claimed human reflection, and required the formation of notions, judgments, and conclusions--things which are not possible to be effected, without tasking the reason and the understanding. The application of the energies of the human mind to the subject matter, received from the Lord, necessarily caused the Divine Word, on the one hand, to be analysed, and, on the other hand, to be reduced to certain leading points; and the multiplicity of objects to be contemplated in their mutual bearings, and resolved into a higher

unity, whereby the human mind obtained, on these matters, greater clearness and definiteness of conception. For, everything, that the human mind hath received from an external source, and which is destined to become its property, wherein it must find itself perfectly at home, must be first reproduced by the mind itself. The original doctrine, as the human mind had variously elaborated it, exhibited itself in a much altered form: it remained the original and yet did not; it was the same in substance, and yet differentas to form." (Ibid., pp. 290-91.)

[26] Yves Congar, "L'ecclésiologie, de la Révolution francaise au Concile du Vatican, sous le signe de l'affirmation de l'autorité," in L'ecclésiologie au XIX^{e} siècle, ed. by M. Nédoncelle (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1960), pp. 93-97.

[27] Ibid., p. 82. Aubert, "Géographie ecclésiologique au XIX^{e} siècle," pp. 19-22.

[28] Congar, "L'ecclésiologie, de la Révolution francaise au Concile du Vatican, sous le signe de l'affirmation de l'autorité," pp. 99-111.

[29] Aubert, "Géographie ecclésiologique au XIX^{e} siècle," pp. 33-35.

[30] Ibid., pp. 36-39.

[31] Quoted in Hamer, The Church is a Communion, pp. 13-14.

[32] Roger Aubert, "L'ecclésiologie au concile du Vatican," in Le Concile et les conciles, (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1960), p. 252.

[33] Ibid., pp. 248-51.

[34] Hamer, The Church is a Communion, pp. 16-17.

[35] Henry Denzinger, The Sources of Catholic Dogma, revised by Karl Rahner, S.J. and trans. by Roy J. Deferrari, (13th ed.; St. Louis: Herder Book Co., 1954), p. 457.

[36] Newman also stands with Möhler as the modern theologian who has had the greatest impact upon Congar's theology. In Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église, p. 9, [he] states that it is these two men who have been the theological pioneers in the areas of the religious subject and of historical development. (It is worthy of notice that right after this Congar goes on to say that St. Thomas remains the master of theology.) Elsewhere Congar indicates that Newman is a theologian who has provided later theology with principles for its own creative utilization. "Newman is truly a 'source.' ...He is also one of the men capable of nourishing the present effort of Catholic thought in the areas of 'integration.'

He has accomplished, certainly not perfectly but in an exceptional way, a synthesis, which has been growing stronger in our time, between values that are all sacred and necessary: Faith and reason, spiritual life and intellectualism, history and thought, psychology and dogma, the prophetic and life in the Church, subject and object, progress and tradition, reflection and poetry." (Sainte Église, Unam Sanctam, 41, [Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1964], p. 567.) But beyond this type of external reference to Newman there are a number of deep and profound currents that flow from Newman to Congar. As with Möhler, these shall be indicated at the appropriate points.

[37] John Coulson, "Newman on the Church--His Final View, Its Origins and Influence," The Rediscovery of Newman: An Oxford Symposium, ed. by John Coulson and A. M. Allchin (London: Sheed and Ward, 1967), p. 125.

[38] "...When our Lord went up on high, He left His representative behind Him. This was Holy Church, His mystical Body and Bride, a Divine Institution, and the shrine and organ of the Paraclete, who speaks through her till the end comes. She, to use an Anglican poet's words, is "His very self below," as far as men on earth are equal to the discharge and fulfillment of high offices, which primarily and supremely are His.

These offices, which especially belong to Him as Mediator, are commonly considered to be three; He is Prophet, P Priest, and King; and after His pattern, and in human measure, Holy Church has a triple office too...which are indivisible, though diverse, viz. teaching, rule, and sacred ministry." (John Henry Newman, The Via Media of The Anglican Church, [3rd ed.; London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1891], pp. xxxix-xi.)

[39] Ibid., p. xli.

[40] "...Theology is the fundamental and regulating principle of the whole Church system. It is commensurate with Revelation, and Revelation is the initial and essential idea of Christianity. It is the subject-matter, the formal cause, the expression, of the Prophetical Office, and, as being such, has created both the Regal Office and the Sacerdotal. And it has in a certain sense a power of jurisdiction over these offices, as being its own creations, theologians being ever in request and in employment in keeping within bounds both the political and popular elements in the Church's constitution,--elements which are far more congenial than itself to the human mind, are far more liable to excess and corruption, and are ever struggling to liberate themselves from these restraints which are in truth necessary for their well-being." (Ibid., pp. xlvii-xlviii.)

[41] Ibid., pp. xlvii-xlix.

[42] Two brief anecdotes, one by Newman and the other by the extreme Ultramontanist, Henry Edward Manning, indicate a humorous and yet revealing way the position of Newman and that of the "opposition." In 1859, Newman published his essay, "On Consulting the Faithful on Matters of Doctrine." It immediately caused a storm of controversy. As will be indicated below, Newman gave a much larger and significant role to the laity on questions of doctrine than many of his contemporaries. In a letter Manning wrote: "What is the province of the laity? To hunt, to shoot, to entertain. These matters they understand, but to meddle with ecclesiastical matters they have no right at all....and this affair of Newman is a matter purely ecclesiastical." (Quoted in Jáki, *Les tendances nouvelles de l'ecclésiologie*, p. 70.) Over the same issue, Newman's bishop, Dr. Ullathorne asked to meet with him. During this encounter, Newman remarked that Ullathorne asked, "Who are the laity?" to which Newman replied, "That the Church would look foolish without them." (John Henry Newman, *The Essential Newman*, ed. by Vincent Ferrer Blehl, S.J., Mentor-Omega Books, [New York: The New American Library, 1963], p. 273.)

[43] *Ibid.*, p. 276.

[44] "Its *consensus* is to be regarded: (1) as a testimony to the fact of the Apostolical dogma; (2) as a sort of instinct, or *phronema*, deep in the bosom of the mystical body of Christ; (3) as a direction of the Holy Ghost; (4) as an answer to its prayer; (5) as a jealousy of error, which it at once feels as a scandal...." (*Ibid.*)

[45] *Ibid.*, p. 275.

[46] *Ibid.*, p. 277.

[47] John Henry Cardinal Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, Image Books (Rev. ed.; Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1960), pp. 36-37.

[48] Bossuet gave a clear formulation of this position when he wrote: "The Church's doctrine is always the same.... The Gospel is never different from what it was before. Hence, if at any time someone says that the faith includes something which yesterday was not said to be of the faith, it is always *heterodoxy*, which is any doctrine different from *orthodoxy*. There is no difficulty about recognizing false doctrine; there is no argument about it: it is recognized at once, whenever it appears, merely because it is new...." (Quoted in Owen Chadwick, *From Bossuet to Newman*, [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957], p. 17.)

[49] "It does not seem possible, then, to avoid the conclusion that whatever be the key for harmonizing the records and documents of the early and later Church, and true as the

dictum of Vincentius must be in his own age, when he might almost ask the primitive centuries for their testimony, it is hardly available now, or effective of any satisfactory result." (Newman, An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine, p. 51.)

[50] Ibid., pp. 51-53.

[51] Ibid., p. 86.

[52] "Not on the day of Pentecost, for St. Peter had still to learn at Joppa that he was to baptize Cornelius, not at Joppa and Caesarea, for St. Paul had to write his Epistles; not on the death of the last Apostle, for St. Ignatius had to establish the doctrine of Episcopacy; not then, nor centuries after, for the Canon of the New Testament was still undetermined. Not in the Creed, which is no collection of definitions, but a summary of certain credenda, an incomplete summary, and, like the Lord's Prayer or the Decalogue, a mere sample of divine truths, especially of the more elementary. No one doctrine can be named which starts complete at first, and gains nothing afterwards from the investigations of faith and the attacks of heresy. The Church went forth from the old world in haste, as the Israelites from Egypt 'with their dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders." (Ibid., p. 88.)

[53] Ibid., pp. 78-79.

[54] Speaking of the development of ideas in general, Newman writes: "But whatever be the risk of corruption from intercourse with the world around, such a risk must be encountered if a great idea is duly to be understood, and much more if it is to be fully exhibited. It is elicited and expanded by trial, and battles into perfection and supremacy." (Ibid., pp. 62-63.)

[55] "It is indeed sometimes said that the stream is clearest near the spring. Whatever use may fairly be made of this image, it does not apply to the history of a philosophy or belief, which on the contrary is more equable, and purer, and stronger when its bed has become deep, and broad, and full. It necessarily rises out of an existing state of things, and for a time savours of the soil. Its vital element needs disengaging from what is foreign and temporary, and is employed in efforts after freedom which become more vigorous and hopeful as its years increase. Its beginnings are no measure of its capabilities, nor of its scope.... In time it enters upon strange territory; points of controversy alter their bearing, parties rise and fall around it; dangers and hopes appear in new relations; and old principles reappear under new forms. It changes with them in order to remain the same. In a higher world it is otherwise, but here below to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often." (Ibid., p. 63.)

[56]"Tests, it is true, for ascertaining the correctness of developments may be drawn out, as I shall show in the sequel; but they are insufficient for the guidance of individuals in the case of so large and complicated a problem as Christianity, though they may aid our inquiries and support our conclusion in particular points. They are of a scientific and controversial, not of a practical character, and are instruments rather than warrants of right decisions. Moreover, they rather serve as answers to objections brought against the actual decisions of authority, than as proofs of the correctness of those decisions. While, then, on the one hand, it is probable that some means will be granted for ascertaining the legitimate and true developments of Revelation, it appears, on the other, that these means must of necessity be external to the developments themselves." (Ibid., pp. 96-97.)

[57]"Supposing the order of nature once broken by the introduction of a revelation, the continuance of that revelation is but a question of degree; and the circumstance that a work has begun makes it more probable than not that it will proceed. We have no reason to suppose that there is so great a distinction between ourselves and the first generation of Christians, as that they had a living infallible guidance and we have not." (Ibid., p. 103.)

[58]It is precisely on this point that Newman clearly distinguishes himself from such men as Döllinger, with whom he shared certain other sympathies. Commenting upon their refusal to accept the decrees of Vatican I, he writes: "It is a tragical event, both for them and for us, that they have left us. It robs us of a great prestige; they have left none to take their place. I think them utterly wrong in what they have done and are doing; and, moreover, I agree as little in their view of history as in their acts. Extensive as may be their historical knowledge, I have no reason to think that they, more than Mr. Gladstone, would accept the Loci Theologici, as Catholic theologians determine it; and I am denying not their report of facts, but their use of the facts they report, and that, because of that special stand-point from which they view the relations existing between the records of History and the enunciations of Popes and Councils. They seem to me to expect from History more than History can furnish, and to have too little confidence in the Divine Promise and Providence as guiding and determining those enunciations.... For myself, I would simply confess that no doctrine of the Church can be rigorously proved by historical evidence: but at the time that no doctrine can be simply disproved by it. Historical evidence reaches a certain way, more or less, towards a proof of the Catholic doctrines; often nearly the whole way; sometimes it goes only as far as to point in their direction; sometimes there is only an absence of evidence for a conclusion, which has to be explained;--in all cases there is a margin left for the exercise of faith in the word of the Church.

He who believes the dogmas of the Church only because he has reasoned them out of History, is scarcely a Catholic." (Quoted in The Acton-Newman Relations, by Hough A. MacDougall, O.M.I. [New York: Fordham University Press, 1962], p.1137.)

[59] Matthias-Joseph Scheeben, The Mysteries of Christianity, trans. by Cyril Vollert, S.J. (St. Louis: Herder Book Co., 1946), p. 540.

[60] Ibid., p. 542.

[61] Ibid., pp. 554-57.

[62] The most important work by Pilgram is Physiologie der Kirche (Mainz: n.p., 1860.) My comments on Pilgram are dependent upon: Jáki, Les tendances nouvelles de l'ecclésiologie, pp. 44-48.

[63] Alfred Loisy, The Gospel and the Church, trans. by Christopher Home (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904), p. 166.

[64] Ibid., p. 59.

[65] Ibid., p. 124.

[66] Ibid., p. 170.

[67] Ibid., p. 168.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid., p. 174.

[70] "It is true that as a result of the evolution, political, intellectual, and economic, of the modern world, as a result of all that may be called the modern spirit, a great religious crisis, affecting Churches, orthodoxies, and forms of worship has arisen to a greater or less extent everywhere. The best means of meeting it does not appear to be the suppression of all ecclesiastical organization, all orthodoxy,and and all traditional worship--a process that would thrust Christianity out of life and humanity,--to take advantage of what is, in view of what should be, to repudiate nothing of the heritage left to our life by former Christian centures, to recognize how necessary and useful is the immense development accomplished in the Church, to gather the fruits of it and continue it, since the adaption of the gospel to the changing conditions of humanity is as pressing a need to-day as it ever was and ever will be." (Ibid., p. 276.)

[71] Denzinger, The Sources of Catholic Dogma, p. 539.

[72] Gustave Weigel, S.J., "Catholic Ecclesiology in our Time," p. 179.

[73] Ibid., pp. 179-80.

[74] Karl Adam, The Spirit of Catholicism, trans. by Dom Justin McCann, O.S.B., Image Books (1st rev. ed.: Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1954), p. 15.

[75] Ibid., p. 63.

[76] Ibid., p. 81-82.

[77] Ibid., pp. 103-15; 223-42.

[78] Ibid., p. 234.

[79] Emile Mersch, S.J. The Whole Christ, trans. by John R. Kelly, S.J. (London: Dennis Dobson, 1936).

[80] Lucien Cerfaux, The Church in the Theology of St. Paul, trans. by Geoffrey Webb and Adrian Walker (2nd ed.; New York: Herder and Herder, 1959).

[81] This essay is the first chapter in Congar's The Mystery of the Church. The section headings do not appear in the English edition.

[82] M. D. Koster, Ekklesiologie im Werden, (Paderborn: n.p., 1940).

[83] Quoted in Hamer, The Church is a Communion, p. 20.

[84] Yves Congar, O.P., "The Church: The People of God," in The Church and Mankind, ed. by Karl Rahner, S.J. and Edward Schillebeeckx, O.P., Concilium, Vol. I (New York: Paulist Press, 1965), p. 15.

[85] Hamer, The Church is a Communion, p. 20.

[86] Pope Pius XII, "On the Mystical Body of Christ and Our Union in it with Christ," in Selected Documents of His Holiness Pope Pius XII (Washington, D.C.: National Catholic Welfare Conference, n.d.), p. 37.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid., pp. 28-29.

[89] Ibid., p. 3.

[90] Ibid., pp. 17-20.

[91] Ibid., pp. 26-27.

[92] Walther von Loewenich says that the term "New Theology" was first coined by Pope Pius XII in a speech delivered to the General Congregation of Jesuits in 1946. At that time he recommended to the Jesuit theologians "in expounding their thought to accommodate themselves to the spirit and tenor of their own century in the manner in which they speak." But then he went on to warn them: "What is unchangeable no one must touch or shake. There is a great deal of talk (but without the necessary clarity of concept) about a 'new theology,' which must be in constant transformation, following the example of all other things in the world, which are in a constant state of flux and movement, without ever reaching their term. If we were to accept suchaan opinion, what would become of the unchangeable dogmas of the Catholic Faith; and what would become of the unity and stability of that Faith? ...When there is free discussion of new questions, the light derived from the principles of Catholic doctrine must always come first; anything in the theological sphere which sounds completely new, must be weighed with vigilant caution; what is certain and reliable must be distinguished from what is mere conjecture, and what may introduce into philosophy and theology changeable and not always praiseworthy fashions; a friendly hand must be stretched out to those who are in error, but it is never permissable to yield to erroneous opinions." (Modern Catholicism, trans. by Reginald H. Fuller [New York: St Martin's Press, Inc., 1959], pp. 243-44.)

[93] Gustave Weigel, S.J., "The Background of Humani Generis," Theological Studies, XII (June, 1951), p. 240.

[94] Adrien Dansette, Religious History of Modern France, trans. by John Dingle, Vol. I (New York: Herder and Herder, 1961), p. 433. Similar observations are made Edgar Hocedez, S.J. in Histoire de la theologie au XIX^e siecle, Vol. III (~~Paris~~: Desclee de Brouwer, 1947), pp. 104ff.

[95] Roger Aubert, "The Church of Rome," in Twentieth Century Christianity, ed. by Stephen Neill (London: Collins, 1961), p. 37.

[96] A. Latreille and R. Remond, Histoire du Catholicisme en France (2nd ed.; Paris: Editions Spes, 1962, 1962), p. 588.

[97] James M. Connolly, The Voices of France, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1961), p. 180.

[98] For a survey of his work and its enduring contribution to Roman Catholic biblical studies see Ibid., pp. 38-45.

[99] Jean Daniélou, S.J., *The Lord of History*, trans. by Nigel Abercrombie (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1958). Yves Congar, O.P., *The Mystery of the Temple*, trans. by Reginald F. Trevett (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1962).

[100] Henri de Lubac, *Le fondement theologique des missions* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1946).

[101] A study of the contributions of both Gueranger and Beauduin can be found in: Dom Clivier Rousseau, C.S.B., *The Progress of the Liturgy*, trans. by The Benedictines of Westminister Priory (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1951).

[102] Jean Daniélou, S.J., *The Bible and the Liturgy*, (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1960).

[103] Henri de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum*, Theologie, Vol. III (Paris: Aubier, 1944). My comments on this work rely upon the summary of it found in: Jáki, *Les tendances nouvelles de l'ecclésiologie*, pp. 18[illegible]-89.

[104] Henri de Lubac, S.J., *Catholicism*, trans. by Lancelot C. Sheppard (4th ed.; New York: Sheed and Ward Inc., 1958), pp. 27-28. *The Splendour of the Church*, trans. by Michael Mason, Deus Books (Glen Rock, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1963), pp. 120-42.

[105] Congar is quite explicit in his rejection of any type of liturgical renewal that sees it in isolation and as the province of an elite group. "The liturgy is not a thing 'in itself': the worship of God is not fully accomplished if it is performed only in a celebration, however perfect, of rites, even sacramental rites. It is not accomplished until it achieves its *res*, its reality, in men themselves.... A living liturgy does not mean an impeccable performance of ceremonies, or a restoration of all the outward forms of worship, however perfect,--though all this may be the first stage, of great educational value, in restoring to the liturgical action all its truth and 'reality'. Neither does it mean initiating *a few* persons while the multitude remain generally and incurably indifferent. A liturgy which could only become 'real' to a coterie of oblates, people who have undergone a long and detailed special education, is not what we are looking for. A 'real' liturgy is one which is capable of really producing its fruit in the soul of the faithful people, of being received and made personal in the conscience of men." (Yves Congar, O.P., *Priest and Layman*, trans. by P. F. Hepburne-Scott [London: Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd., 1962], pp. 142-43)

[106] Connolly, *The Voices of France*, pp. 66-67.

[107] Henri de Lubac, *Histoire et Esprit: L'intelligence de l'Ecriture d'apres Origens*, (Paris: Aubier-Montaigne, 1950).

[108] Jean Daniélou, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Primitive Christianity*, trans. by Salvator Attanasio (Baltimore: Helicon, 1958). *Philon d'Alexandrie* (Paris: Fayard, 1958). *Origen*, trans. by Walter Mitchell (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1955). *Platonisme et théologie mystique*, Theologie, Vol. 2 (Paris: Aubier, 1944).

[109] Henri de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, trans. by Edith M. Riley (London: Sheed and Ward, 1949). *The* ~~Un-~~ *Un-Marxian Socialist: A Study of Proudhon*, trans. by R. E. Scantlebury (London: Sheed and Ward, 1948).

[110] In the late 1940's Daniélou wrote a series of pamphlets in which the express aim was to enter into dialogue with Marxism, Existentialism, Protestantism, Judaism, and Hinduism. These were then brought together into one book. (*Dialogue* [Paris: Le Portulan, 1948].)

[111] Jean Daniélou, *God and the Ways of Knowing*, trans. by Walter Roberts, Meridian Books (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1957), p. 22.

[112] Jean Daniélou, *The Advent of Salvation*, trans. by Rosemary Sheed, Deus Books (Glen Rock, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1962), p. 58.

[113] *Ibid.*, pp. 7-10.

[114] Daniélou, *God and the Ways of Knowing*, p. 15.

[115] Daniélou, *The Advent of Salvation*, p. 18.

[116] *Ibid.*, p. 20.

[117] The history of papal views of ecumenism is found in: George H. Tavard, *Two Centuries of Ecumenism*, Mentor-Omega Books (New York: The New American Library, 1962), pp. 90-98, 180-90. Gregory Baum, O.S.B., *Progress and Perspectives* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1962), pp. 25-43, and *That They May Be One* (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1958).

[118] For a discussion of this matter see: Leonard J. Swindler, *The Ecumenical Vanguard*, (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1966), pp. 222-23.

[119] In speaking about a new revised edition of *Divided Christendom* which he had prepared and submitted to the Dominican Father General he writes: "My Father General, however, had asked me to submit the book to him for censorship so that he might be in a metter position to defend me. I finished my

work of 4 August 1948, a fortnight before the opening of the Amsterdam Assembly. The Father General took it away in his portfolio on 2 October 1948 and for nearly two years I had no news of it in spite of several urgent letters. It was not until 17 August 1950 that Father General gave me back my manuscript and, in the light of his knowledge of the imminent publication of *Humani Generis*, he earnestly put me on my guard against any 'false irenicism'." (Congar, *Dialogue Between Christians*, p. 35.

[120] Henri de Lubac, *Le Surnaturel*, Theologie, Vol. VIII (Paris: Aubier, 1946). A reformulation of this work appeared in French in 1965, and has since appeared in English. *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, trans. by Rosemary Sheed (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967).

[121] A discussion of de Lubac's study and the ensuing debate is found in: R. J. Donelly, S.J., "Recent Theological Opinion on the Supernatural," *Theological Studies*, VIII (1947), pp. 213-249 and "Discussions on the Supernatural Order," *Theological Studies*, IX (1948), pp. 554-566.

[122] Henri Bouillard, *Conversion et grâce chez Thomas d'Aquin*, Theologie, Vol. I (Paris: Aubier, 1944). My discussion is dependent upon G. C. Berkouwer's summary of the relevant section in *The Second Vatican Council and the New Catholicism*, trans. by Lewis B. Smedes (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), pp. 62-63.

[123] Bernard L. Marthaler, "Henri de Lubac," in *The New Day*, ed. by William Jerry Boney and Lawrence E. Molumby (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1968), p. 14.

[124] The response of R. Garrigou-Lagrange first appeared as an article. ("La nouvelle theologie, où va-t-elle?," *Angelicum*, XXIII [1946].) It was reprinted in Reginald M. Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., *La Synthèse thomiste* (Paris: Desclee de Brouwer, 1958). My references are to the latter.

[125] *Ibid.*, p. 704.

[126] *Ibid.*, p. 721.

[127] Jean Daniélou, S.J., "Les Orientations présentes de la pensée religieuse," *Etudes*, 249 (1946), pp. 5-21.

[128] M. M. Labourdette, O.P., "La Théologie et ses sources," *Revue thomiste*, XLVI (1946), pp. 353-371.

[129] Connolly, *The Voices of France*, p. 181.

[130] Mario von Galli, *The Council and the Future* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966), p. 131.

[131] Garrigou-Lagrange, *La Synthèse thomiste*, p. 710.

[132] Pope Pius XII, "Humani Generis," in *Selected Documents of His Holiness Pope Pius XII* (Washington, D.C.: National Catholic Welfare Conference, n.d.), p. 7.

[133] One gets a sense of the plot-dimension from the encyclical *Pascendi Gregis* which was published in 1907 and was a direct attack upon the principles of Modernism. The tone of this document is sharp and indignant. And its language is highly polemical. One reads that Modernism is a "delirium," an "insanity," an "audacious sacrilege," and a "monstrosity." (E. E. Y. Hales, *The Catholic Church in the Modern World* [Garden City, New York: Hanover House, 1958], pp. 186-187.) From the point of view of the encyclical, Modernism is seen as being consciously devious. "Since it is a very clever artifice on the part of the modernists (for they are rightly so-called in general) not to set forth their doctrines arranged in orderly fashion and collected together, but as if scattered, and separated from one another, so that they seem very vague and as it were, rambling...." (Denzinger, *The Sources of Catholic Dogma*, p. 514.) This tone was carried over into the practical measures that Pius X stated were necessarily to safeguard the faith, including the formation of vigilance committees which were to deliberate secretly. The view that Modernism was a plot became evident in a subsequent event. In 1910, the Holy See, still believing that Modernism continued to exist in the form of a clandestine organization, required all priests having pastoral charges to sign an antimodernist oath. Later, all candidates for ordination were required to sign. (Dansette, *Religious History of Modern France*, II, p. 307.) The secret society of Integrists was called the *Sapiniere*. It readily employed the methods of an "intelligence agency." It "co-ordinated resistance to modernism and 'demochristianity.' and to inter-confessionalism, behind all of which it saw an international judeo-masonic plot against the Church." (*Ibid*., p. 311.) The spectre of Modernism was raised against all "innovators" until Vatican II. "...All through the fifty-year period the integrists used the condemnation (of Modernism) as a rod with which to beat down any sort of opposition--including the attempts of Benedict XV to end the post-Modernist reign of terror." (John Ratte, *Three Modernists* [New York: Sheed and Ward, 1967], p. 25.) The following passage from Schillebeeckx indicates that the plot-theory had not been completely buried by Vatican II. "Even while the Council was sitting there appeared a book of more than 600 pages, not obtainable through normal channels but distributed among the council fathers, with the title *Complotto contro la Chiesa* (Rome 1962), written by a certain 'Maurice Pinay.' In an extreme and obscure manner the book reflects what the time of the Council was printed in some Italian newspapers: that the Council was a clever manoeuvre to push through the reluctant *apertura a sinistra* (the Italian

idea of a break through). One passage is enough to illustrate this: '...a veritable fifth column of agents controlled by Freemasons, Communism and the secret powers that command them; some of these agents were even to be found among those cardinals, archbishops and bishops who form a kind of progressive wing within the Council and who are trying to get the various reforms adopted...and all this ostensibly in order to modernize the Church and to align her with the times, but with the hidden intention of opening the doors to Communism, to hasten the collapse of the free world and to prepare for the imminent destruction of Christendom'." (Edward Schillebeeckx, O.P., *The Layman in the Church*, trans. by M. H. Gill and Son Limited /Staten Island, New York: Alba House, 1963/, pp. 68-69.)

[134] Congar, *Dialogue Between Christians*, p. 37.

[135] Pope Pius XII, "Humani Generis," p. 4.

[136] "There are many who deploring disagreement among men and intellectual confusion, through an imprudent zeal for souls, are urged by a great and ardent desire to do away with the barrier that divides good and honest men; these advocate an 'irenicism' according to which, by setting aside the questions that divide men, they aim not only at joining force to repel the attacks of atheism, but also at reconciling things opposed to one another in the field of dogma." (*Ibid*., p. 6.)

[137] *Ibid*., p. 13.

[138] *Ibid*., p. 7.

[139] *Ibid*.

[140] *Ibid*., p. 34.

[141] *Ibid*., p. 12.

[142] *Ibid*., p. 21.

[143] *Ibid*., p. 5.

[144] E. E. Y. Hales, "The Americanist Controversy," *Month*, XXXI (January, 1964), p. 20.

[145] von Galli, *The Council and the Future*, p. 130.

[146] Congar, *Dialogue Between Christians*, p. 43.

[147] Loewenich, *Modern Catholicism*, p. 264.

CHAPTER II

SACRED HISTORY: THE FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING THE CHURCH

The reality of the Church, for Congar, must be interpreted in the context of the plan and meaning of sacred history.[1] To isolate the doctrine of the Church from this framework is analogous to trying to understand a person without seeking to know his past or how he sees himself in relation to the future. Congar turns to Scripture to examine particular messages and to utilize specific ecclesiological images. But much more significantly, he turns to Scripture because he believes that it reflects a total historical development which is rooted in the providence of God. The reality and mission of the Church is an important and essential part of this divine plan. At the same time, its purpose is determined by the total design of salvation history. The intent of this chapter is to explicate the way in which Congar views this design.[2]

Covenant is fundamental to salvation history. The character of the divine-human relationship is dialogical. It is one of address and response.

> Every word or communication from one being to another needs to be received. A word is intended to make some impression; for the person

> to whom it is addressed it is a call, a challenge or stimulus, and it creates virtually, an interpersonal relationship. This structural feature is found in any word. Thus the Word of God also serves to create a relationship: the religious relationship which takes root in us through faith. The Bible has a dialogue structure, as André Neher would say. It is the book in which God's plan for a covenant is disclosed to us. We find continually in the New Testament such expressions as "obedience to the faith", to "obey the gospel", "obedience in acknowledging the gospel". The Word must be received and welcomed.[3]

The fact that man is created in the image of God means that in his very being he is meant to be in relationship to God. By his very nature, man is capable of being addressed and of responding, either affirmatively or negatively.[4] In a sense which we will have to define, man is intended to be God's partner or responsible son.

Although salvation history is the history of God's relationship with man, this does not mean that God and man are in any sense equals, as is sometimes suggested by the concept of the Covenant. Such an interpretation would be a complete distortion of the basic meaning of Scripture. The consummation of this history is not the tying of God to man's futile attempts to put himself at the center of the universe, but the very opposite, namely, to let God be God in every dimension of life.[5] The soteriological significance of Jesus Christ is not that men might rule as demi-gods, but that they might be released from the slavery of such attempts and become free, that they might leave the order of servitude and enter the order of sonship.[6]

God is transcendent. He cannot be dictated to or manipulated by man. He is the source of all life. He is the one who addresses man. This is clearly seen in one of the distinctions that Congar makes between religion and faith.[7] Religion is an activity which moves from man to God, who is considered to be the goal of this activity. Man attempts to ascend toward Him by prayer and adoration. In contrast, the faith-relationship originates with God. It is God-initiated.[8] But the proper acknowledgement of God's transcendence should not prevent one from also giving appropriate emphasis to God's "philanthropy." In fact, His transcendence can only be properly understood in relation to the way in which He is for man.

God who is infinitely above man is always seeking man. The sovereign God is Love.[9] Both of these aspects are present in Congar's interpretation of Exodus 3:13. For Congar, God's response to Moses' question about what name He should be called can be seen as the translation of the whole Bible: "I will be who I will be."

> ...I will be the one who will lead you from Egypt. I will be the one who will help you cross the Red.Sea; I will be the one who will lead you in the desert; I will be the one who will feed you when there is nothing to eat; I will be the one who will guide you to Sinai; I will be the one who will establish the covenant on the basis of my law; I will be the one who will give you my law. I will be the one who will keep the promised land for you; I will be the who will dwell in the midst of you and who will establish my dwelling amongst you, and who will reside in the temple; I will be the one who will chastise you for your sins, who for these sins will let Jerusalem be taken and destroyed, and I will lead the remnant to captivity in Babylon; yet I will be

> the one who will be with you in captivity; I will be the one who will bring you back from captivity. I will be the Savior. This is sacred history. That which He is in Himself, God does not reveal in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, we know that He is the Father, the Son, snd the Holy Spirit; but in the Old Testament, God does not reveal to us that which He is in Himself: He gave himself all of time to become known. He wishes to be invoked in prayer as the God who judges, who chastises, and who pardons. Finally: I will be God with you, until I incarnate myself, I will be the Savior, I will be Jesus Christ, I will be my Holy Spirit in you, I will be the Eucharist.[10]

Beyond the transitory and limited life of man and his history is the providence of God. Through the knowledge of God's presence in past events and in the present, his people have confidence that he is their eternal future. The transcendent God is always the God whose last name is pronounced Jesus Christ.[11]

Without suggesting that God lacks something or is in need of man, Congar holds that it is of the very essence of God that He enters into fellowship or communion with His creation. The establishemnt of this communion between God and man, and man and man is the goal and meaning of salvation or sacred history. Congar is fond of quoting Abraham Heschel's statement: "The Bible is not a theology for man, it is an anthropology for God."[12]

Salvation history, for Congar, is divided into three basic periods or stages: Promise, the messianic Coming, or the time of the Church, and eschatology. The Old Covenant is the time of the establishment and completion of God's final "seeking" of the heart of man, and the diverse nations of the world. The events that are described in the Old Testament point forward to the coming of Christ, and find their completion in him. Salvation history also has its "end" in Christ. He is both its center and goal. For this reason, Christ is the key for looking at both the events of the Old Testament and at the future. All of sacred history--past, present, and future--finds its meaning in him. Yet the past and future do not collapse like an accordian. They are essential parts of the one developing plan of God.

> Throughout the time of Israel, events and witness had a prophetical or typological value, announcing the mystery of Christ; during the time of the Church, the prophetic witness will involve a dynamic element, the full accomplishment of the redemption of the world, but it refers to Christ as the cause, realized and active, of the definitive blessings of the "new *and eternal* covenant". But throughout both th *these times*, the plan is the same, and proceeds with continuity (albeit thanks to renewed initiatives on God's part), with the result that the witness can and must refer back continually to the permanent activity of God which is prosecuted *according to a particular pattern of which Scripture is the record*, in order to promote the realization of God's plan in the future, throughout time.[13]

Thus while it must be affirmed that Christ is the key to the whole plan it must also be affirmed that the significance of Christ must be seen in reference to the total design of salvation history. It is true thatthe Old Testament must be read through Christ. But Christ is also understood in light of the promises and hopes of the Old Testament. Similarly, even though the end of history has occurred in Christ, it is a developing end--one moving towards final completion. God's plan and initiatives do not stop with Christ. The time of the Church is a time in which the "end" is announced and made present to all the dimensions of world history.

We can now turn to indicating in detail how Congar views the "content" of the development of the plan of God.

A good indication of the way in which Congar sees the events of the Old Testament having both a significance in themselves and yet pointing beyond themselves is his interpretation of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt.[14]

> It has become a commonplace to say that the events of the exodus had the value of a type, that is they were an initial carrying into effect or a preliminary sketch of what God was later to do, of what fundamentally he will always do, for us. With this in mind, we are thinking above all of the exodus proper, the Paschal deliverance from servitude, the long journey across the desert, the manna and the water from the rock, the entry into the Promised Land. We should think too of God's dwelling among his people, of the tent of meeting, of the Cloud. In the analysis we have made, we have not concealed the debt the information we have on this subject owes to the theology of the temple as it was elaborated in the Levitical and priestly tradition. But long before any priestly tradition or any post-exilic ideology came into existence, there were the facts of the exodus, the religious personality of Moses and his decisive role as mediator. There was the experience of the desert bound up with the tent of meeting, with the Presence of God above the tent or the ark. These facts lead to a new stage in the history of God's Presence among his people, and for all the time that was to follow, they would have the value of a type.[15]

Throughout the history of Israel there is this sequence of humiliation, suffering or death, restoration, salvation, and glory and resurrection. In their entirety they announce the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. Beside the exodus from Egypt, Congar mentions the deluge ahd safety through the ark of Noah; the birth, and particularly, the sacrifice of Isaac; the theme of the Remnant; the dry bone of Ezekiel; and Jonah.[16] Since the plan of God is unified it is not surprising that there are significant "constants" in it. But as suggested, there is also development.

The characteristics of both continuity and development are quite evident in The Mystery of the Temple, in which Congar interprets the plan of God as the history of his presence. For Congar the "golden string" that runs through all of God's purposes is that God is always seeking and establishing a people who are to be His people. Again and again, God seeks to enter into more intimate communion with mankind. The stages of this development are ones of increasing inwardness. "They move from things to persons, from fleeting moments of God's Present to a Presence that is lasting, from the simple presence of his action to a vital gift, inward communication and the joy and peace of communion. Their final word is 'God all in all'...."[17] Instead of attempting to rehearse Congar's entire presentation of this motif in the Old Testament, we will look at one example.

Congar holds that in II Kings[18] there is an encounter between Nathan and David in which the former makes a statement that is pregnant with the future of God's relationship with Israel. Nathan is sent to tell David that he will not build a house for God but that it is God who will build one for David. Paraphrasing II Kings 7:1-16, Congar writes:

> ...God says to David: 'It is not you who will provide me with shelter or offer me sumptuous hospitality. I have no need of this and I did not ask Moses or the Judges for a house to dwell in. It is I who will treat you munificently in your descendants and in your (my) people, as I have begun to do in your own case,

> since I chose you when you were watching over your sheep, and I have made you the head (the shepherd) of my people and have been with you in all your undertakings. This munificence that I shall show towards you will consist in granting stability (permanence) to the people and to your descendants.[19]

Instead of David trying to provide permanence for God through constructing a temple, God says, through Nathan, that he will provide any needed stability through David's lineage.

But Congar indicates that there is another level of meaning in this passage. When Nathan announces that God has rejected the idea that David is to build him a temple, the reason is given that in the past when God had brought the Israelites out of Egypt, he had not dwelt in such a shelter. In those days, he came and went. It did not matter then whether God was in this or that particular place. The significant point was that God wanted to be with His people.

God is always Yahweh-who-brought-Israel-out-of-the-land-of-Egypt. Therefore, God is not to be confined. The covenant he has established with the Israelites involves all of life, and not just certain places and times. This is a theme that became more clearly and explicitly understood by the prophets.

> We are not yet told that God is in men, he wants to be with them. But verse 7 in our text /"This way and that the whole race of Israel journeyed, and I with them; now to this tribe, now to that, I gave the leadership of the rest, and never did I reproach any of them for not building me a house of cedar."/ is very similar to certain passages in the prophets declaring that there is no true sacrifice other than man himself, e.g. "What, men of Israel, did you spend forty years in

> the desert, ever for me your burnt-sacrifice, ever for me your offerings?..." (Amos 5:25); "Burnt-sacrifices, offerings, not of these was my theme when I gave commandments to your fathers at the time of their deliverance from Egypt." (Jer. 7:22).[20]

Congar proceeds to indicate how this statement made by Nathan to David, as interpreted by the prophetic tradition, looked entirely to the future--first, to the future history of the monarchy in Israel and then to the messianic time to come. The heart of this motif is that God's dwelling-place is with and in his people--a theme which is summed up in Jesus Christ.[21]

But it is important to note that there is no simple chronological development of God's purposes in history. There are what Congar terms "delays." An instance of this is expressed in II Kings 8:15-21. In this passage, Solomon repeats, at one level, a great deal of Nathan's prophecy. But Solomon simply interprets it to mean that God promised David that his son would build the temple. He misses the implicit future and orientation of Nathan's statement and treats it in a purely mundane manner. Congar comments:

> The same kind of tone is heard later in the statements of political theology made by a man like Eusebius, theologian, courtier and friend of Constantine. He believed and he proclaimed that the latter had established the kingdom of God. Men are always tempted to confine themselves to what they see and touch, to be satisfied with this and to think that a preliminary achievement fulfils God's promise.[22]

Yet Congar says that one should not make the mistake of assuming from this that the building of the temple should be viewed as a negative event. The building of the temple illustrates rather than denies another continuous theme of Scripture, namely that the completely transcendent God enters human history.

using persons , events, and institutions to accomplish His purposes. As was the case with the founding of the monarchy, the founding of the temple was a purely human project. But in both cases, God intervenes. He ends by blessing and ratifying that which he had in a sense rejected. Although David first decided to build it and Solomon planned and made it a reality, it was in the final analysis the work of God. For the most important event was God's decision to bestow his Presence. "The Temple was a gift of God. Neither David nor Solomon, neither priestly rite nor prophetic trance had 'drawn down' his Presence or brought about his coming. He remained supreme and every communication made by him to his creatures was a grace."[23] From that time, it is in relation to the Temple that Israel will find its bearing with regard to its fidelity or infidelity towards God. "It is from his Temple that Yahweh judges and leads his people, just as he had done in the days of Moses from the tent of witness."[24]

The whole thrust of the design of God in the Old Testament--the time of Promise--is that God elects a people and dwells in its midst, But this people is not chosen for a position of privilege. Israel is fundamentally a messenger and a prophet.[25] It is a forerunner. It points beyond itself to the One who is to come.

With the advent of Christ, the traditional privileges of the Temple are transferred to him. Jesus becomes the "place" where man now finds God's presence and salvation.[26] As is true with his relation to the Law, Jesus comes not to destroy the Temple but to fulfill it. With him, the messianic era has arrived.

The first fruits of the eschatological times have begun to appear. He is the true beneficiary of the promises that were originally made to Abraham.[27] He is the definitive Presence of God in history, never to be superseded.

> The immolation of the body of Jesus Christ is considered in this great text [Hebrews 10:4-10], under its most profound aspect, Christ's loving submission to the will of the Father. We are at the heart of the whole work of Jesus, in a word, the work which his Father had given him to do. It is to this that all God's plans leads, it is here that all its strands are gathered together. It is from this point that it moves forward to its full implementation. We have seen that after asking for a series of sacrifices consisting in the offering of animals, God had known through the prophets that he expected a better, truer sacrifice, man's offering of himself, that is, the loving obedience of his heart. The new regime, the new covenant announced by the prophets, were to have this character of inwardness and truth. In the context of the New Testament they are equally characterized by a change from the order of servitude or slavery to be order of sonship. The servile order of worship consisted in a legal transfer of property in kind. The filial order of worship, even when it includes external features common to all liturgical acts, consists chiefly of the movement of love and obedience through which those who have the privilege of sonship direct their lives according to the all-loving will of the Father.[28]

The Old Adam represented the forces of pride, disobedience, and alienation. By desiring to exalt himself, man fell. Jesus is the New Adam. By becoming a servant and being obedient to God even unto death the old order has been overcome and the new order established.[29] As the last part of the above quotation suggests, the work of Christ is directed towards all of humanity. "God's plan is to dwell in all through one man alone."[30] The intent of the work of Christ reaches its goal when it has taken effect in men, with the result that communion between God and man, and man and man has been initiated and made possible for all.

> God's design as it is revealed throughout the Bible, from the "Let us make man, in our own image and likeness" of Genesis to the bridal of the last chapters of the Apocalypse, is to bring mankind into fellowship with his divine life. It is this design that is expressed according to different aspects by those great bib biblical images in which the mystery of the Church has been revealed to us: Bride, Body, City, Temple.[31]

The People of God become co-heirs with Christ. They share his inheritance, and consequently are received as free sons into the family of God. They share in his reconciling mission to the world. It is for this reason that this second major stage of salvation or sacred history is both the time of the advent of Christ and the time of the Church.

Because of its central importance for Congar's ecclesiology, it needs to be noted with particular care that he stresses the qualitative difference between Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Salvation history does have one plan. Yet in Christ something entirely new has taken place. The people of the New Covenant are still the people of God whose beginnings are made known in the Old Testament. But in Christ the Church is God's people under absolutely new conditions.[32] Some indications of Congar's emphasis upon the newness of the covenant established by Christ have been indicated: Christ is the definitive presence of God in history; the One to whom the forerunners pointed has come; the time of promise is over, and fulfillment is at hand; Christ is the New Adam; in him a new order of sonship has been established; man is now given the possibility to become his fellow heir.

Congar makes the same point by suggesting that in the Old Covenant God gave "gifts" to his people, while in Christ he gave himself.[33] In the Old Testament, God intervened. In the New Testament, the transcendent God entered into the world and gave himself to human nature. And through the Incarnation there has henceforth been a sacred reality in the world--the church as the Body of Christ.[34]

Another way in which Congar underlines the qualitative difference between the Old and New Covenants is by indicating the change in the action and presence of the Holy Spirit before and after Christ. Before the resurrection, the terms and expressions that were used to describe the Holy Spirit were primarily concerned with temporary inspiration. After Easter, they stress that the Spirit now dwells in and fills the individual believer and the Church.[35] He is sent by the Father and the Son to establish within man "the relation of sonship, of an effective return to the Father, of indwelling and 'divinization.'"[36]

In accentuating the newness of the covenant established by Christ, Congar is addressing two different fronts. He is pointing to what he considers to be an inadequacy of a position that has dominated much of Roman Catholic thought since Augustine, namely, the idea of the ecclesia ab Abel. This theme was used by Augustine, and those who followed him to show the unity of faith of the "Christians" before and after Christ. The emphasis is upon the fidelity of God upholding the Church through all the vicissitudes of history, and thus upon continuity in the history of the People of God between its various periods. This is, for instance, at the opposite end of the continuum from the radical view of Joachim of Flora that the period of the Son is followed by a revolutionary new order of the Spirit. In the "Church from Abel" view, reform is always strongly anti-revolutionary and equated with conservation and renewal.[37] Congar's main dissatisfaction with this concept of the Church is precisely that it abolishes the qualitative difference between the Old and New Covenants. Augustine and Scholastic theology did not give sufficient weight to the history of salvation, and consequently they saw the historic "missions" of the Son and the Holy Spirit to be largely accidental in character.[38] Followingtthe Alexandrian school's use of allegory in interpreting Scripture, there was a tendency to substitute a non-temporal consideration of spiritual "types" for a truly historical comprehension of the economy of the gifts of God. When allegory is used, the movement from one covenant to the other is seen as being a spiritual, rather than a historical, transition.[39] It is a turning away from Cain and a return to Abel. And with the eclipsing of the historical, there is also a limiting of the Christological motif.

Congar finds a more historical approach in such early Greek Fathers as St. Irenaeus, St. Chrysostom, and St. Cyril of Alexandria. These men did not deny that there were divine gifts under the former Dispensation, as is indicated by their rejection of any Marcionite tendency. But these gifts were seen as preparations for the gift of Christ, and then the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit. In anthropology, they held that since Christ, the possibility exists of being a new man through the action of the sacraments.[40] It is obvious that Congar has appropriated this tradition.

The second front that Congar is addressing is Protestantism. It is his conviction that Protestant theology always tends to return the reality of the Church to the status of Israel. It fails to discern the radical new situation that the people of God is in as a result of the Incarnation, the sending of the Holy Spirit, and the establishment of the apostolic ministry. It still conceives of God as working under the same conditions as he did in Israel. In brief, Protestantism fails to understand that the "final reality" has already been given and presently exists in the esse of the Church, if only in a partial manner. Protestant thought looks to the future for what is already present in the Body of Christ or the Church. Congar's position on this matter significantly influences every major aspect of his thought and his entire estimation of Protestantism.[41]

It has been observed that with Christ the eschatological age began, and that he is consequently the meaning and the "end" of all history. And yet it has also been observed that the period after Christ--the two thousand years since his death--is also a time in which God is still bringing his plan to completion. Although these two affirmations form a paradox, they point to the fact that Congar holds that during the "time of the Church" the Kingdom of God is both present and future. It exists in and yet it is still anticipated by the Church.[42]

One way that Congar explains the time between the Christ-event and the Parousia and the relationship between these two events is by combining Oscar Cullmann's metaphor of the *maquis* or resistance movement, which he borrows from J. J. von Allmen and R. de Pury.

> The crucial battle has been fought, and Christ is victorious. But the struggle still goes on, the enemy is still in occupation, and he is still strong enough to do damage. In the occupied country everybody perhaps in a confused way may look forward to liberation, but many people have adjusted themselves and are content to live not too badly under prevailing conditions. Others have gone underground. These refuse to recognize the occupier's rule and put all their faith and hope in the Power, still far away, who has achieved a victory that may not have looked much but was in fact decisive. The Liberator already reigns over these men who are already spiritually living in freedom, oppressed and harried as they still are. When full and final liberation comes, it comes from outside, through a landing, a 'parousia' of the Liberator--but it also comes from the *maquis*, which gets to work with fresh energy; it would have been helpless by itself, but it is integrated into the final triumph.[43]

The point where the analogy does not fit for Congar is that the real *maquis* withdraws altogether from society and works with neither the occupying forces nor with the institutions that still remain intact from the past. The Church, in contrast, cannot divorce itself from the world. Even if it is not to be of the world it is to be in the world. The Church must mix with those who have temporarily adjusted to the occupational regime, and even with the active "collaboration." In any case, Christ has won the decisive battle--although the forces of the enemy, of "this world" do not yet realize it. The latter fights on, continuing to inflict damage and even winning minor skirmishes. But the Church realizes that the outcome is certain. It lives with the knowledge that V-day is on the way, and seeks to communicate this fact to others.

In a more strictly theological manner, Congar discusses the present-future tension of "the time of the Church" by distinguishing between Christ as Alpha and as Omega. The work which Jesus has already finished is represented by Alpha. It includes the sequence of his birth, his life and teachings, and his death. The final completion of the work of Jesus and the full presence of the Kingdom is represented by Christ as Omega.

> Christ is the Alpha and the Omega of the whole relation of man with God, which has to be a relation of fellowship (God's fellowship-temple). But he is its Alpha only through all his acta et passa in carne, for us, ...while he is its Omega with us, not only in the body of flesh that was born of Mary and was crucified, but in his fellowship-body which we compose with him and in him--and he in us. He is its Alpha as principle and root, and his powers of hallowing, ruling and revealing consequently endure a state of abasement; he will be Omega as effect and fruit, in a state of fullness, of opening out, of unfolding ('apocalypse') all the powers of the Shoot.[44]

As indicated, Christ as Alpha is a "once for all" event, done for man, who contributes nothing to it. Christ as Alpha is always the source of grace. There is nothing in the Omega of the Parousia that does not derive from the Alpha of his Incarnation.[45] But the time between the Incarnation and his return is also the time in which Christ "fills" all of creation with his reconciling grace. In this way, man is integrated into the "whole" which is the saved world, he participates in a new "being-according-to-God," that is a filial being. This is the "fullness" and "unfolding" that is mentioned in the above quotation. And it is achieved by the faith and love of the Church. "So it is that the Church, after Christ and from Him, becomes the _pleroma_; she becomes after Christ Himself, the body of the whole, that is, of an existence according to God which is possible for all things."[46] Christ restores the world by "filling" it with grace (Alpha), but at the same time he is "filled" by the Church and thus by the world to the extent that his work has taken effect (Omega).[47] But does this mean that man in his response of love and faith contributes to Christ's mission of reconciliation?

In one sense, the answer to this question has to be in the negative. Nothing happens at the completion of the Kingdom (Christ as Omega) that is not already present implicitly at its beginning (Christ as Alpha). Yet, in another sense, the answer must be in the affirmative. Man does add to Christ and "completes" him. Between Christ as Alpha and as Omega there is a true development. During this in-between period, the Church as the Body of Christ is the means by which he completes Himself from the material of the world.

> Jesus is indeed the Alpha of all, _Primogenitus omnis creaturae_, and he will be the Omega of all: all creatures are _through_ him and _for_ him (Colossians 1, 15-16); but between the sovereign act by which all began and the effective kingship in which all will be fulfilled all things must grow towards him, and free beings freely.[48]

Christ makes restoration and reconciliation possible. And yet the positive contributions of humanity are included in the Church as the pleroma of Christ, and thus in the fruition of God's plan.[49]

Another approach to Congar's interpretation of the "time of the Church" is to examine the way in which he presents the relationship betwemn the Kingdom, the Church and the world during this period or stage of salvation history. The Kingdom denotes both the active reign of God through Christ, and the effect of this act in an order of reality in which man and creation will be conformed to and gathered under its one head, Christ. In fact, the Kingdom, promised and initiated in the Old Testament, is Jesus Christ, first as Alpha, and then, at the eschatological consummation, as Omega. At present, Christ is the Lord of all creation, but he does not exercise the full power of his kingship. His kingship during his earthly existence and during the "time of the Church" is veiled. He performs his mission as suffering servant. In the sphere of human history his kingly wisdom is the wisdom of the Cross.[50]

During the "time of the Church" the duality between the spheres of the Church and the world continue to exist. Each of them has its ultimate end in Christ. But they do not serve him in the same manner or on the same plane. "The Church is the sphere of Christ's domain where his lordship is recognized and obeyed, where, in other words, He reigns. The world is the sphere where this lordship is ignored or opposed."[51]

Through the gift of grace, the Church co-operates directly in the establishment of the Kingdom. The reason for this is that the direct sources or causes of the Church's constitution are the very same causes of that "renewal of which the Kingdom will be the consummation: the kingly, priestly and prophetical power of Christ, and the Holy Spirit."[52] The Church co-operates directly in the power of Christ, but always within the same limit within which Christ exercised his powers, that is, through servanthood. Congar speaks of the Church in such terms as the seed or germ-cell, sign, parable, and first fruits of the Kingdom.[53] All of these point to the direct relationship that the Church has to the Kingdom. Yet, as we shall later see in more detail, the Church cannot be identified with the Kingdom. Christ is not only Lord in the Church. He is also Lord over the Church. He remains its transcendent Lord, which it always seeks to serve more faithfully.

The domain of the world belongs to the order of creation, having its source in the Word of God. Yet, because of the Fall, the world becomes distorted and ambiguous. It is controlled by the powers and principalities. Man seeks an autonomous existence, and ends in idolatry. Only as this self-seeking is reversed in Christ and the powers subdued is creation brought back fully into the plan of God.

But because human or "world" history is founded and ruled over by Christ, it has, even while involved in the risks of ambiguity and sin, authentic strivings. It seeks to overcome death, decay, ignorance, tyranny, and injustice. History at its deepest level seeks to obtain wholeness and reconciliation. And to the limited degree that men are successful in achieving these goals they labor, although often unknowingly, for Christ, who embraces the purposes of creation in the work of its redemption.[54] But mankind is never wholly successful. A sinful world is always being engendered at the same time. If one focuses only upon the world, there is always just about as much reason for pessimism as for optimism.[55] For this reason, the Kingdom ultimately comes from above, that is, from outside the possibilities of human history. The goal of history is not just one of coming to maturity but a victory.[56]

On this point, Congar develops a middle position between what in Roman Catholic circles are called eschatological and incarnational solutions. Briefly stated, the former tends to stress that human achievements are totally insignificant in comparison to the divine reality. The emphasis is upon the discontinuity between heaven and earth. The city of man is radically overshadowed by the city of God, which is already present, in part, in the Church. Earthly realities are merely shadows of the perfect things to come and are to be discarded when the Kingdom arrives in its fullness. The incarnational interpretation underlines the fact that God became man, and that consequently all finite reality, including man and his achievement, have been at least partially sanctified by that fact. Consequently the emphasis is upon continuity between the orders of creation and redemption, and upon the fact that "natural values" are completed and perfected by the Kingdom rather than discarded.[57]

Congar finds both positions to be too one-sided. The eschatological position misses seeing any significant continuity. The incarnational view affirms too much continuity between the world and the Christian reality that will be fulfilled in the

Kingdom.[58] By stressing that both orders exist during the "time of the Church," Congar maintains part of the dualist quality of the eschatological interpretation. There is no automatic or necessary evolution fram the world to the Kingdom. The world never achieves its goal through the efforts of man. The Kingdom is a gift, and as suggested, a victory. Consequently, it is made possible by God and those human aspects which are inauthentic and the result of sin are rejected. Yet there is also continuity. The Kingdom through the Church is not only a gift from above but it is also made of "history" and the "world." God responds to man's gropings after him. The Kingdom is a restoration and fulfillment. The unequal aspect of the divine-human covenant continues. The Kingdom comes from God. But the relationship is maintained. Man and creation are reconciled to God, and not destroyed.

In the time between the initiation and the completion of the Kingdom, Christ arranged for the continuation of his work in his Body or the Church through two different "agents": his apostles and the sending of the Holy Spirit. Fundamentally, the apostles carried on Christ's mission of love, because in a sense they were part of Christ's earthly ministry. They were the ones who received him. They were clearly recipients. But they were also given the impetus and power to continue the movement of agape to the world.

> The apostolate is closely linked with Christ's life for us in the flesh--with his visible presence of those days, his powers and activities. It belongs to the sphere of the Incarnation, of the coming of the Son of Man,

> whose own mission it continues. Christ, in the discourse after the Last Supper, emphasizes sizes this important aspect, saying that he now sends his apostles as the Father had sent him, (John 17:16,18), and that men will treat them as they treated him.... In fact, from the Father to him and from him to them, it is one continuous mission and, in consequence, also one set of associated powers (cf. John 17:18; 22-3; 20:21)--the same mission which is, in the same degree, a mission of love.[59]

The apostles represented their Lord and had the same authority, which they exercised in his earthly "absence." This horizontal continuity of his mission is carried down through the ages by the successors of the Twelve. The triple power of government, priesthood, and teaching of the hierarchy is the same as that exercised by the Twelve, which in turn proceeds from Christ.[60]

However, "the time of the Church is not just one of horizontal continuity. The Holy Spirit is also intimately related to the reality of the Church on account of his central place in the divine economy. In one sense, the work of the Holy Spirit is self-effacing. He does not establish any new revelation. He only makes present and fulfills what has already been established by Christ. Yet in another sense, the Holy Spirit has his own separate work.

> It was necessary that Christ should go away, that he should be exalted, "glorified", for the Holy Spirit to be given. As regards Christ, the sending and the work of the Spirit are bound up with his condition of *Kyrice*, of lordship over all things. The Holy Spirit indeed continues and accomplishes the work of Christ, but is linked with Christ's coming and his life in the flesh in a very different way from the apostles. The mission of the Holy Spirit is certainly presented as a follow-up of Christ's but not precisely as its *continuation*. It is a distinct mission; he himself is another Paraclete, a Person distinct from Christ

> and one sent on a new mission which cannot be equated with that of the Incarnate Word, though in close connection with it.[61]

Christ founds revelation and salvation. The Holy Spirit interiorizes them. He imprints the truth and grace of Christ within man's hearts.

> Christ effected once and for all, in himself, the union of mankind with God; the Spirit brings within its score a vast number of individuals. Christ proclaimed the word of God; the Spirit brings it to mind and inclines the heart to understand it. Christ built the house and the Spirit comes to dwell there (Eph. 2:22). Christ gives us the status of sons; the Spirit puts in our hearts the consciousness of this status and enables us to carry out the corresponding acts and duties.[62]

As a result, not only the human apostolic ministry bridges the centuries between Christ and the present, but also the divine Holy Spirit.

In his building-up of the Body of Christ, the Holy Spirit works both through the established means, the hierarchical functions of the Church, and outside these means. Or as Congar puts it, the Spirit works through both "institution" and "event." With regards to the former, the Spirit is continuously effecting interiorly what the hierarchical ministry does exteriorily. Congar even uses the term con-celebration to express the close and vital relationship between the work of the Spirit and that of the apostolate.[63]

But there is also a prophetic or charismatic side to the work of the Holy Spirit. He is not bound to the "usual" or instituted ways. He can and does manifest himself through unexpected and occasional events, and in a manner that is entirely unpredictable as far as man is concerned. He maintains a soveriegn freedom of action. For example, Congar comments upon how often the course of the history of the Church has been positively shaped by the Holy Spirit functioning through "events" rather than through the "institution." He suggests that the *Confessions* of St. Augustine is full of this type of occurrence, with perhaps the most famous being his hearing the *tolle, lège* sung over and over again by a child and then chancing on the Epistles of St. Paul.[64]

But Congar stresses the point that it is the same Spirit that is present in both areas. "These two elements are in reality one and the same work, and obey the same Spirit. And he who animates the one to seek new ways, animates the other to watch that nothing deviates from the tradition and unity of the Church."[65] And by the very nature of the case, the event side is always to be tested by the institution side. The latter is always the judge of the growing edge of the Church, although it exists only that the Church might continue to serve its Lord and bring all of creation into communion with its Creator. And to be Christ's servant it is necessary for the institutional side to respond to the new leadings of the Holy Spirit.

Even though Congar does not hesitate to call the Holy Spirit the life-giving and indwelling soul of the Church, he is well aware that it is an ambiguous concept and that it can be used in an inadequate manner.[66] There are two dangers in referring to the Spirit as the soul of the Church. It can suggest that the Church is perfect and as a result is not in need of reform or renewal, for with a divine soul there is no room for significant failure, let alone sin, within the Body of Christ. It can also suggest that the living magisterium (often reduced to the pope) is the tradition of the Church. The reason for the latter is that when there is a strong sense of the divine presence in the contemporary situation, it can be thought that there is no need to refer to Scripture or earlier expressions of tradition. And even, in this view, if the magisterium does refer to the sources, historical study and research is not necessary because it has a special perspicacity which allows it to properly interpret without a critical investigation as to what a text means. Congar holds that this understanding, as it developed during the Middle Ages, and continued in Roman Catholic theology, is too natively "divinistic." It takes insufficient account of both the human side of the Church, and also of the fact that the Church received its foundation once and for all in Christ and the apostles.[67]

It is in reaction to this type of excess that Congar develops the position that the relationahip between the Spirit and the Churchiis a covenant and not one of substantial union. "There is no question of an incarnation, of union in actual being, such that all the actions of the Church would be physically and personally the actions of the Holy Ghost and have no other subject of attribution than him." This does not mean, however, that there is an uncertain or hypothetical element in the Holy Spirit's relationahip to the Church. There is a promise of presence, and since it is the promise of God and not of man, there is an absolute certainty that the promise is being and will be fulfilled.

"The regime of the new and filial covenant is a regime of an abiding-gift, of a permanent presence and assistance, closely bound up with a being-with which is an indwelling."[68] At every level, and at every point of its history, the Church is dependent upon the presence and the activity of the Holy Spirit which gives it life in Christ. Thus the Church is not able in any way to control the Spirit. He is always present as a gift that is also transcendent.

Looking beyond the "time of the Church" to the fulfillment of the Kingdom and the "time" when God will be all-in-all, Congar sees, as one would expect from the general movement of salvation history, the completion of God's plan in terms of communion. This emphasis is clearly expressed in the way in which Congar explicates what he terms "the eschatological temple," that is, when there is no other temple than God himself. Having suggested that God's plan moves increasingly towards the overcoming of all separation and alienation, he states that the final reconciliation does not involve some type of pantheism or a fusion of finite realities into the abyss of the infinite. Instead, it involves communion. Both God and individual human beings maintain their identity, but they are in perfect harmony with each other. Just as the assertion that there is only one God carries with it the implication that all nations, all history, and even the cosmos are ultimately included in the one and universal design of God, the assertion that God is Three-in-one implies that all ultimate reality is fundamentally in the form of communion.[69]

It is within this understanding of salvation history that Congar develops his doctrine of the Church. From our analysis, it is evident that this doctrine is intrinsically related, in his theology, to Christology, eschatology, and anthropology. In contrast to ecclesiological views that treat the Church as a separate reality, such as the one outlined in the previous chapter which held that the Church is a visible Society capable of being adequately defined in a juridical manner, Congar seeks to explicate and locate his doctrine of the Church within its total theological milieu, which in turn is defined by the direction and meaning of salvation history. This will become even more explicit in the following chapters.

In concluding this chapter, it will help to sharpen our interpretation of Congar's position by posing two questions that Protestant theology has often raised in response to certain aspects of Roman Catholic theology. These questions will be addressed to Congar. In turn, the nature of his response to these criticisms will be suggested.

In an essay on the ecclesiastical document, Constitutio de Ecclesia, of the Second Vatican Council, K. E. Skydsgaard discusses several views of history that have been prevelant in Roman Catholic theology. The first is what he terms the "organismic" approach. This is the view that one finds in Möhler, Newman, and Adam. History is seen on an organic model. Everything that happens within the history of the people of God is given a positive place in its total growth. For example, the history of the Church is seen to be a part of sacred or salvation history. Skydsgaard states that in modern times this has been the dominant understanding of history in Roman Catholicism.[70]

This way of thinking has been challenged by a wholly different approach. "According to this philosophy of history we are not dealing with an organism, but with a progressive _cursus_ _vitae_ (Lebenslauf)."[71] Skydsgaard says that in this second position history becomes something personal. It is not just a neutral process of development, but a "living history," one with decisions and responsibilities. Every period has its temptations. And Church history is frequently sinful history. Often the essence of the Church has been obscured by inadequate forms which have been adopted because of sinfulness. Skydsgaard indicates that Congar's book _Power and Poverty in the Church_[72] is an expression of this point of view.

But Skydsgaard goes on to suggest that if this second approach would be followed by Roman Catholic theology to its logical conclusion it would lead to a radical revision of its concept of history, one which Skydsgaard believes would coincide with the biblical concept.

> Just think of the concept of history as we find it among the prophets of the Old Testament. How much is there to be found in this history of the Chosen People of darkness and veiled understanding, of abyss and heights, of guilt, of the judgment and the grace of God! How often did he not permit the nation to be led into judgment to the point of near-extinction. Yet again and again his unfathomable grace was effective in his judgment. The mercy of God awakened the people again and again to a new life. In the Old Testament, history was not seen as the development of a seed which grows slowly, almost automatically, and ends in perfection. To be sure, this history too had a _telos_, an end. But the final consummation of history was completely in God's hands.

> The way toward this telos was no gradual development, but was prescribed by the leading of God's hand. The way of history which God prescribes for his people, his Son, and his church leads through death to life. This is a far cry from any evolutionary interpretation of history.[73]

Skydsgaard does not find this dialectic of judgment and grace in the Constitution de Ecclesia. He suggests that Congar's essay "The Church: The People of God" also fails to express an understanding of the breaking of the New Covenant by God's people, or a comprehension of the justice and wrath of God. It is his opinion that such a view of sacred history inevitably leads to an ecclesiology of glory.[74]

What can be said with regard to Congar's implied and direct response to this type of criticism? A number of aspects of his "reply" will be considered in later chapters. But several comments can be made in light of our presentation of his interpretation of sacred history. We have observed that he uses organismic terms and concepts. He affirms that salvation history has different stages, that Christ as Omega is implicitly in Christ as Alpha, and that the Church is the seed of the Kingdom. In addition, he asserts that the "time of the Church" is not empty of meaning but a period of development towards the Kingdom. Yet we have also observed that there is no automatic chronological maturation. Man in his freedom--and this includes the Christian in the Church--can thwart and delay the plan of God. As a result, Christ is not only Lord in the Church but also Lord over the Church, which means that the Church is always called to renewal and reform. Likewise, the Church and the Kingdom are not to be completely identified. God alone can bring the Kingdom to fulfillment. The Church is "only" a sign and agent of the Kingdom.

Thus Congar would say, in response to Skydsgaard, that salvation history is not simply progressive. One cannot validly hold that the Kingdom in history matures as an acorn grows into an oak tree. Sinful man and his choices are involved, as are the continued initiatives of God. Although Congar does not use the term, it is not unfair to his position to say that in one sense there is a dialectic between the judgment and the grace of God in sacred history.

But in another sense the dimension of necessity that is implied in the organismic approach to history is accurate. The necessity is not inherent in man. It exists because sacred history is rooted in the providence of God. One cannot be certain of all the smaller steps of development, but the major ones have already been made known in Scripture. The Christian cannot know all of the details. These are only known to God. But the man who has faith in Jesus as the Lord of all history, as its Alpha and Omega, knows that the design of God will be completed.[75] And, for Congar, the Roman Catholic Church is a definite part of this design, which means that the Church is involved, although in a servant form, in its development. Consequnetly, Congar affirms that there is an organismic pole in sacred history. However, he qualifies this pole by relating it to the Lebenslauf view or pole. Whether this is an adequate solution is an issue which we will have to leave open for the present. In any case, he does not indulge in an ecclesiology of glory. He affirms one of servanthood.[76]

A second question that has often been posed by Protestant theology for Roman Catholic theology, and one which clearly addresses Congar, concerns the relationship between Jesus Christ and the history of the Church. We shall adopt Oscar Cullmann's formulation of this matter, because among the major contemporary Protestant theologians his concept of salvation history is most closely in agreement with Congar's position. The major point at which there is disagreement is that Cullmann holds that Roman Catholicism does not sufficiently subject later tradition to the norm of Scripture. It does not adequately observe the necessity of constant orientation to the mid-point, that is, to Christ.[77] Cullmann himself makes an explicit effort to avoid what he considers to be a frequent failure within Protestant theology to give sufficient emphasis to the "time of the Church." Against this type of "cramped Protestantism," he argues that redemptive history has been advancing continuously ever since the ascension of Christ, and that the "agent" of this expansion is the Church. But, for Cullmann, "the time of the Church" must not be absolutized. And this he thinks is precisely the error of Roman Catholicism.

Cullmann claims that the early Church already recognized this danger, and formed the canon in order to make a clear distinction between the ancient tradition, which was codified as Scripture, and all later tradition. For Cullmann, the apostolic calling was unique, and thus unrepeatable, since only those who had been a witness to the resurrection of Christ could be apostles. The canon ensured that the continuing Church would be faithful to the apostolic witness. Scripture, in contrast to all later tradition, was regarded as belonging to the center of salvation history. By failing to separate the two, Roman Catholicism has tended to be independent of the norm of Scripture. And consequently, it has been susceptible, in Cullmann's estimate, to developments which are not based upon the gospel.[78]

Congar, in contrast, argues that Cullmann constructs a false boundary between Christ and the apostles on the one hand, and the post-apostolic Church on the other hand. Rather than seeing them as linked together, Cullmann places them in opposition to each other.[79] He not only neglects apostolic succession but the fact that the same Holy Spirit is at work in both periods. Congar holds that Cullmann fails to see this continuity because he puts too much emphasis upon the latter part of the dialectic between the "already" and "not yet" of the Kingdom of God. Consequently, there is a tendency to reduce "the Church of the Word Incarnate to the condition of the People of God under the old Dispensation."[80] This leads Cullmann to conceive of the temporal duration of the Church in a less positive manner than Congar affirms to be the case, with his position that the Church develops the pleroma of Christ in the time between his Alpha and his Omega, and that it is the first fruits of the Kingdom. Again, we must leave open for the present the issue of whether or not this is an adequate response to Cullmann's criticism.

Notes to Chapter II

[1] Congar has stated that the phrase "history of salvation" (*histoire du salut*, which is the French equivalent of the German *Heilsgeschichte*) is somewhat ambiguous. The reason for this is that it can imply the history of all who have been saved. In this case, the history of salvation would begin with the start of humanity, that is, with Adam. He prefers terms that point more unequivocally to the history of revelation. (Yves Congar, O.P., "The People of God" in *Vatican II: An Interfaith Appraisal*, ed. by John H. Miller, C.S.C. [New York: Association Press, 1966], p. 201.) The ones he uses most frequently are: The economy of salvation (*economie du salut*), the design of God (*dessein de Dieu*), plan of God (*plan de Dieu*) and sacred history (*histoire sainte*). However, as shall become clear as we proceed, what he means by these terms is what is generally meant by redemptive or salvation history, and sometimes these latter two terms will be used in our analysis as synonyms of "sacred history."

[2] Several comments need to be made with regard to the way in which I have approached and interpreted Congar's writings. Basically, I have chosen to treat them systematically rather than chronologically. In practice, this has meant that my perspective has been more shaped, from a chronological point of view, by his more recent writings, by which I mean the ones published since the Second World War. They have provided the points of reference for the way in which the earlier writings have been included in this study.

It is my opinion that there is a much stronger current of continuity in his writings than of discontinuity. His dissatisfaction with the one-sided juridical view of the Church, his stress upon seeing the Church as necessarily and vitally related to Christ and the Holy Spirit, his concern to affirm that the Church is a communion as well as an institution, his conviction that the facade of the Church is in need of reform if the Church is to effectively witness to contemporary man, his desire to correlate the reality of faith to the concerns of daily life, and his view that the Catholicity of the Church means that the latter can be enriched by values which have developed outside of its tutelage are motifs which he has developed throughout most of his theological career.

This is not to suggest that certain significant developments have taken place in his theology. One expects development in the thought of a man who has a strong notion of development--and from one who has been a consistently serious student of Scripture and the history of the Church, and who has been so open to the contemporary world. The most significant example of development is his attitude towards the importance of sacred history. In Chapter One, it was indicated that there was already a presentation of the People of God concept in his essay "The Church and its Unity," which was written in 1937. But when he wrote his lengthy article "Theologie" for the *Dictionnaire de Theologie Catholique* in 1939, it is clear that *his theology had not yet* been strongly formed along the lines of this type of biblical approach. Since the Second World War, this motif has moved more and more to the forefront. With this new emphasis, there concurrently developed a further appreciation of the concept of the Church as the People of God, and of the importance of eschatology. However, while this meant a shift in Congar's ecclesiology, it was not a radical one. It provided him with a more adequate basis from which to develop the above mentioned themes. If I were to treat his writings in a more chronological manner, I would make this shift of focus to sacred history the main breaking point between his earlier and later theology.

[3] Yves Congar, O.P., *Tradition and Traditions*, trans. by Michael Naseby and Thomas Rainborough (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967), p. 253.

[4] Congar holds that the dialogical structure is particularly evident in Jesus' parables. "From the literary standpoint, the parables are frequently wonderful little works. Having first tickled our curiosity, they charm us by their stories, by their features so finely observed and set forth. We get the inkling that there is something in them that we must figure out, some application of them that we must make. Each parable is a challenge: it is not simply a riddle, for it aims at getting the one who hears it into action; it puts him a question; better still, it puts *him* in question." (Yves Congar, O.P., *Jesus Christ*, trans. by Luke O'Neill [New York; Herder and Herder, 1966], p. 115.) He also suggests that because of a *chiaroscuro* quality Jesus' parables are also designed to address *man in his freedom* to accept or refuse. "By means of them, I am, as it were, driven to make the decision and to give the answer I had been evading. I am personally summoned, brought back to the 'heart,' to that level of the conscience where man can no longer try to avoid the issue, no longer try to conceal his deepest needs by making a show of his possessions, where man is all but compelled to face himself, to see himself as he *is*, to give up the deceptive shelter of a spurious security, to take his stand in the direction of the ultimate realities. I am invited to that 'immersing oneself deeper in existance' which Soren Kierkegaard saw as the necessary condition for entering truly into Christianity." (*Ibid*., p. 116.)

[5] Yves Congar, O.P., *Les Voies du Dieu vivant*, (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1962), p. 405.

[6] Yves Congar, O.P., *The Mystery of the Temple*, trans. by Reginald F. Trevett (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1962), p. 141.

[7] There are obvious paralells between Congar's criticism of "religion" and those which Barth has made of the same subject. (Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, trans. by G. T. Thomson and Harold Knight [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1956], I/2, pp. 280-81ff.)

[8] Congar, *Les voies du Dieu vivant*, p. 418.

[9] *Ibid*., p. 402.

[10] *Ibid*., p. 400. Congar is aware that there are other viable translations of this passage: "I am he who is," "I am he who makes being," or "I am who I am." (See *Ibid*., pp. 399-400; *Jesus Christ*, trans. by Luke O'Neill [New York: Herder and Herder, 1966], pp. 37-38; "Christ in the Economy of Salvation and in our Dogmatic Tracts," trans. by Aimee Bourneuf, R.S.C.J. in *Who is Jesus of Nazareth?*, ed. by Edward Schillebeeckx, O.P. and Boniface Willems, O.P., Concilium, Vol. XI [New York: Paulist Press, 1966], p. 7.) It should be observed that Congar uses a translation that "lends" itself to stressing God's activity in history, instead of the ones which stresses God's Being--which has been the practice of Thomism. Congar does not want to separate God in himself (*en-soi*) from the God who has revealed himself in history for us (*pour-nous*). He indicates that there is a basis in what God is in himself for what he is for us. Similarly he is convinced that Roman Catholic theology has tended to place far too much emphasis upon the *en-soi* of God apart from his *pour-nous*, and that consequently God has become an "empty" reality to many contemporary men. "This *does* mean that one speaks of the mysteries of God in such a way as to unite a profound perception of what they are in themselves with a vital explanation of what they are *for us*: uniting anthropology for God to theology for man." (*Ibid*., pp. 22-23.)

[11] Congar, *Jesus Christ*, p. 45.

[12] Congar, "Christ in the Economy of Salvation and in our Dogmatic Tracts," p. 16. This statement also appears in a number of other places.

[13] Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, p. 18.

[14] Congar adopts, as one would expect from an advocate of salvation history, a typological interpretation of Scripture. In doing so he distinguishes this approach from allegorical exegesis which he believes was often carried to extremes by the Church Fathers and by theologians during the Middle Ages. "Between the type and the antitype, there is a genuine historical correspondence which expresses the principle purpose of the event or institution. Between allegory and its interpretation, the correspondence exists only on certain points which have been arbitrarily chosen to represent facts or ideas of different kinds. The type presupposes a design in history which is developed and realized by stages

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(Congar, *Jesus Christ*, pp. 119-20. Cf., *Ibid.*, p. 60; Yves Congar, O.P., *La foi et la théologie* [Paris: Desclee & Co., 1962], pp. 11-12.)

Congar is quite aware that the sapiential approach is one that Protestantism has generally rejected. Barth's repudiation of the *analogia entis* and his affirmation that the only access to the *Logos is through* Christ is, for Congar, an expression of this attitude. (Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, p. 67.) There are two different concepts of revelation involved in this matter. "On the one side there is a sapiential concept of God, of revelation and of the work of theology, according to which we can in some degree attain to a knowledge of the nature of things, of their ontological reality. Further, with the data of our faith as a starting-point and by the use of our intellects which, though enfeebled, are not wholly impotent, we can develop these elements of truth which our faith contains. For Protestants, on the contrary, God only reveals himself in what he is and does for us; there is not a question of ontology of the things of grace, (grace itself is not a 'thing'), but of a communication the whole reality of which is brought about by God and consists in him. We may recall here what we said above: we Catholics are interested in the reality in us of God's gifts; Protestant would see only God giving or rather deciding to give,-- and consider all interest concentrated on the gift as treachery to the giver. God is always the subject, man never; he is only the object." (Congar, *Dialogue Between Christians*, p. 427.)

It should also be observed that Congar distinguishes between what he terms a critical reading of the text and religious interpretation. He holds that one must use every available tool to penetrate Scripture. Yet one must move beyond this level to the religious level, which involves man in the type of I-Thou dialogue that was mentioned above. This "deeper" approach also has certain similarities with the devotional reading of Scripture as advocated by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. (*Life Together*, trans. by John W. Doberstein [New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954], pp. 50-57.) For instance, Congar writes: "In order to approach the Bible validity at this more profound level it is necessary to seek for God, to be anxious to find God and to obey and be faithful to Him. It has the same intention as that of prayer, which consists in accomplishing the will of God. And to seek God is not to go here and there. There is only one place where I will find God, and it is in His will, in His demands, in this interior disposition of communion with His will that the Lord's Prayer expresses in a perfect way." (Congar, *Les voies du Dieu vivant*, p. 30.) In the "scientific" approach, Scripture is confronted by the reader in such a way that it is exterior to himself. But at the deeper level of understanding, Scripture is no longer confronted as an exterior object to be analyzed and dissected. "The Word of God is before me like a living arrow which enters my heart. The Word of God is like a sharp sword which cuts to the joints and marrow, which overthrows me, which questions me, which does not leave me satisfied, but which also brings me a flame, a devouring fire, a flame from which one feels warmth and life." (Ibid., p. 31.) At this level, the Word of God is no longer an object but a subject that addresses the individual self at the very core of his existence.

Finally, it is interesting tb note that at a formal level Congar's view of typological interpretation agrees with the eight implications of this method as they have been outlined by Gerhard von Rad, "Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament," trans. by John Bright, in Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics, ed. by Claus Westermann (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1963), pp. 36-39.

[15] Congar, The Mystery of the Temple, pp. 18-19.

[16] Congar, Tradition and Traditions, pp. 71-72.

[17] Congar, The Mystery of the Temple, p. xi.

[18] I am following the Roman Catholic Church's canon: in it the books which appear in the Protestant canon as I and II Samuel, I and II Kings, and I and II Chronicles appear as I, II, III, and IV Kings, and I and II Paralipomena.

[19] Congar, The Mystery of the Temple, p. 28.

[20] Ibid., p. 29.

[21] Ibid., p. 53.

[22] Ibid., p. 31.

[23] Ibid., p. 51.

[24] Ibid. It would take us beyond the scope of the present chapter to indicate the way in which Congar envisages the relationship between the prophetic and priestly traditions in the Old Testament. However several aspects of his presentation on this matter pertain both to the discussion of the presence of God and to issues that will be considered later, particularly the question of reform in Chapter Five.

Although he is of the opinion that Protestant exegesis has sometimes overstated the case, Congar does suggest that there is a tension between the priestly and prophetic traditions. "There is no denying that there is bound to be a difference between priests and prophets and even a certain amount of opposition. Prophets are peremptory, they are the men who attack the roots of things. They bring a message which goes counter to the status quo, whilst priests are men who follow a policy of give-and-take, are willing to compromise and are attached to tradition and the status quo." (Ibid., p. 57.) The prophetic attack upon the "root of things" comes to expression, for instance, in their insistence that the pomp of public worship does not necessarily entail the true worship of God. The prophetic witness always has a vital sense of the living God. And the true God, in contrast to the false gods of security, is one who demands obedience and is concerned about justice and mercy. It was because of this consuming sense of Yahweh as living and dynamic that the prophets repeatedly attacked the type of thinking that tried to identify Yahweh with only the present state of affairs. They always maintained a tension between his transcendence and his presence. Hence the prophets frequently assert that God is going to withdraw from the Temple because of the iniquities of his people. But Congar holds that this is just one side of the prophetic proclamation. The prophets also speak strongly of God's yearning to be present with his people. This is particularly the case with the prophets of the Babylonian exile. "In a word the deported Israelites in Babylonia had the hallowed experience which every religious man undergoes. In dereliction, exile, prison, God is always near, always with those who fear and love him. God says the Isaiahs of the exile, is with the contrite and humble heart." (*Ibid*., p. 70.) In the prophets of the exile (in one sense, it would be correct to state that in Congar's view the prophets are always in exile) one also discovers the first anticipation of the New Testament concept of the Temple as nothing other than the people itself when it is truly *his* people. (*Ibid*., p. 70.)

Another important characteristic of the prophetic witness is that it has a heightened sense of the meaning and direction of salvation history. The priestly theology always tends to identify God's plan and presence with a particular stage of development. In contrast, the prophets are convinced that God continues to be the God who released the captives from bondage in Israel, and that he consequently continues to call his people to new tasks. "The prophets' mission was to throw light upon and also to further the realization of God's plan which, by successive stages, was moving towards its final consummation in Jesus Christ. They were to prevent this movement from a fixation at one or other of its stages or in one or other of its characteristics. This was their duty particularly after the building of the Temple by Solomon. Men were not to think, as we have seen that Solomon himself was inclined to do, that God's purpose had been fulfilled, the promise to David accomplished, and that the Temple with its priesthood and worship now represented the very truth of the Presence. This was a genuine danger and Judaism succumbed to it when, after the restoration of Esdras and Zorobabel, the voice of the great prophets was silent." (*Ibid*., pp. 71-72.)

[25] *Ibid*., p. 246.

[26] *Ibid*., p. 138.

[27] Congar, *The Mystery of the Church*, p. 18.

[28] Congar, *The Mystery of the Temple*, p. 141.

[29] Congar, *Jesus Christ*, pp. 18-19; 26-27.

[30] Congar, *The Mystery of the Temple*, p. 183.

[31] Congar, *Lay People in the Church*, pp. 59-60.

[32] Congar, *The Mystery of the Temple*, p. 295.

[33] *Ibid*., p. 280.

[34] *Ibid*., pp. 297-98.

[35] *Ibid*., p. 274.

[36] *Ibid*., p. 287.

[37] Heiko Augustinus Oberman, *Forerunners of the Reformation*, trans. by Paul L. Nyhus (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966), pp. 14-24.

[38] Congar, *The Mystery of the Temple*, pp. 265-66; 282.

[39] Yves Congar, O.P., "Ecclesia ab Abel," in *Abhandlungen über Theologie und Kirche: Festschrift für Karl Adam*, ed. by Marcel Reding (Düsseldorf: Patmos-Verlag), p. 86.

[40] Congar, *The Mystery of the Temple*, pp. 264-65.

[41] Some of the numerous places that Congar develops this argument are: *Dialogue between Christians*, pp. 347-57; *Tradition and Traditions*, pp. 491-93; *Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église*, pp. 466-81; *The Mystery of the Temple*, pp. 293-94.

[42] It is because the "end" of history has already appeared in Christ that Congar strongly affirms that eschatology does not simply deal with the last paragraph of salvation history but with its deepest significance. (Congar, *The Wide World, My Parish*, p. 113; Cf. Congar, *Jesus Christ*, p. 28.)

[43] *Ibid*., p. 108.

[44] *Ibid*., p. 163.

[45] *Ibid*., p. 327.

[46] Congar, *Jesus Christ*, p. 138.

[47] Yves Congar, O.P., *Sainte Église*, Unam Sanctam, Vol. XLI (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1964), pp. 174-75.

[48] Congar, *Lay People in the Church*, p. 71.

[49] As we shall see in Chapter Seven, in Congar, the concepts pleroma (and thus Christ as Omega) and Catholicity are often synonymous. This is evident in the following passage in which he speaks of catholicity as the capacity of the Church to integrate and assume all positive human values. "Catholicity is the universal capacity for unity, or the dynamic universality of the Church's principles of unity. Consequently, though unity is given straightway, catholicity, being its universality, is something potential.... This indicates, too, the capacity in the Church's fountain-heads of unity--the grace of Christ, the baptismal character, the apostolic faith, sacramental charity, community life in fellowship--to assimilate, fill, win over to God, reunite and bring to perfection in Christ, the whole man and all men, all human values. Such a capacity implies that every human value, while retaining its own specific character, can be "recapitulated" in Christ, that is to say revivified by his spirit and taken up into the unity of his Body, which is the Church. To take but one example of which it is easy to imagine others of the same kind, catholicity as the universal capacity of the Church's principles of unity means that the peculiar values of the Hindu world--values in the sphere of thought and art, values of character, language, cultural in their specific nature--can be taken up into the unity of the Body of Christ and become mystically, as it were, the flesh and members of the new Adam. Christ will not be complete till he has, in this way, incorporated the whole man in each of us, and all the human values lying scattered in all their variety throughout the world. For he has--and so has the Church, his Body--the capacity to bring all this together in himself unto God." (Congar, The Mystery of the Church, pp. 100-101.)

[50] Congar, Lay People in the Church, pp. 64-74.

[51] Congar, Jesus Christ, p. 183.

[52] Congar, Lay People in the Church, p. 95.

[53] Ibid., p. 98; Congar, Jesus Christ, pp. 204, 211-12.

[54] This is the basis for Congar's affirmation that the Christian can and should co-operate with the non-Christians in seeking brotherhood, justice, and peace. Because Christianity is always a promoter of what is genuinely human, it can collaborate with those forces and movements in the world which seek these realities. (Congar, Priest and Layman, pp. 349-54.)

[55] Congar, Lay People in the Church, p. 105.

[56] Congar, The Wide World, My Parish, p. 46; Jesus Christ, p. 201.

[57] Daniélou and Bouyer are considered to be advocates of the eschatological interpretation, and Thils, de Chardin, and de Lubac of the incarnational interpretation. For a discussion of the positions of these men and of the issues that are involved see: Peter Riga, Catholic Thought in Crisis (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1963), pp. 16-25 ff.; Connolly, The Voices of France, pp. 149-53.

[58] Congar, Lay People in the Church, pp. 86-87.

[59] Congar, The Mystery of the Church, p. 106.

[60] Congar, Sainte Église, pp. 182-84. Congar compares what the Roman Catholic understanding of the apostolicity of the Church with that of Protestantism by picturing the Church as a lake, and then asking about its source of water, or the grace of God, and the way in which it is supplied. Extreme Protestantism, he says, holds that the water of the Incarnation is evaporated into the sky and falls directly into the lake. The Roman Catholic view is that the lake is supplied by canalisation, with pipes bringing the water from the source. He admits that most Protestants would not completely affirm this interpretation of the Church as pure event (which he says is Barth's view), and would say that there is a certain horizontal continuity in the means by which the Church receives grace, namely Scripture and the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. But Congar thinks that this is an arbitrary reduction of the human agencies that Christ himself established for the continuation of his mission. (Ibid., pp. 66-67; Yves Congar, O.P., Christ, Our Lady and the Church, trans. by Henry St. John, O.P. [London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1957], pp. 34-38.)

[61] Congar, The Mystery of the Church, pp. 107-108.

[62] Ibid., p. 109.

[63] Ibid., pp. 136, 117, 185; The Mystery of the Temple, p. 297.

[64] Congar, The Mystery of the Church, pp. 136-38.

[65] Congar, Les voies du Dieu vivant, pp. 182-83.

[66] Congar, The Mystery of the Church, p.1180.

[67] Congar, Les voies du Dieu vivant, p. 174. "The lack of a sufficiently elaborate doctrine of the development of dogma, a doctrine well informed of the facts, was obviously a circumstance favouring the neglect of the historical factors in favour of an exclusive action of the Holy Spirit. There was a certain idea of development apparent in the affirmation of this action, but an idea with hardly any historical orienta-

tion. But above all, this ecclesiological pneumatology led to an excessive tendency to situate at the same level the apostolic movement of constitutive revelation and historical moment of assistance. The former ran the risk of not appearing fully and supremely 'situating,' normans, the latter of not being sufficiently 'situated,' normatum." (Congar, Tradition and Traditions, p. 174.)

[68] Congar, The Mystery of the Church, p. 130.

[69] Congar, Sainte Église, p. 173.

[70] Kristen E. Skydsgaard, "The Church as Mystery and as People of God," in Dialogue on the Way, ed. by George A. Lindbeck (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1965), pp. 158-59.

[71] Ibid., p. 159.

[72] Yves Congar, O.P., Power and Poverty in the Church, trans. by Jennifer Nicholson (Baltimore: Helicon, 1964).

[73] Skydsgaard, "The Church as Mystery and as People of God," p. 160.

[74] Ibid., p. 161.

[75] Congar, Priest and Layman, pp. 279-80.

[76] See Chapter Five for a detailed analysis of this view.

[77] Oscar Cullmann, Christ and Time, trans. by Floyd V. Filson (Rev. ed.; Phildelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962), pp. 53-54.

[78] Ibid., pp. 170-74.

[79] Since the question of the relationship between Scripture and tradition will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, it will suffice for the present to say that Congar also wants to distinguish between the value of Christ and the witness of the apostles and the value of the post-apostolic Church, and thus between Scripture and tradition. He sees the former as always being constituting and situating, and the latter as always conditioned and situated. But they are still in essential continuity. Congar discusses Cullmann's position in a number of places. Amongst others see: Tradition and Traditions, pp. 38-42, 468, 491-92; Les voies du Dieu vivant, p. 42; Sainte Eglise, p. 369; "Conclusion" in Le Concile et les Conciles (Paris: Éditions de Chevetogne & Éditions du Cerf, 1960), p. 323.

[80] Congar, "The Church: The People of God," p. 29.

CHAPTER III

TRADITION: ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE CHURCH AND TO SCRIPTURE

The title of this chapter suggests issues, such as the norm(s) of theology, that are logically prior to strictly ecclesiological matters. But in the sense in which Congar interprets it, Tradition is also an essential part of the doctrine of the Church. Following the paths opened by Möhler and Newman, Congar describes Tradition as the living transmission of the Gospel in the communion of faith and worship.[1] It is the Gospel living in the Church. Our foremost concern in this chapter will be to explicate the meaning of this definition. In order to do this adequately we will also have to consider in what ways, if any, Tradition is a norm of theology.

At the beginning of our analysis, precise attention needs to be given to the way in which Congar defines both "Tradition" and 'traditions." Since these are terms that are used in a variety of ways by different theologians, it is important that the manner in which Congar understands them be made as clear as possible.

The fundamental and, at the same time, the most general meaning of Tradition for Congar is a very wide, inclusive and etymological one.

> Taken in its basic, exact, and completely general sense, tradition or transmission is the very principle of the whole economy of salvation. Tradition, in this sense, encloses and dominates it completely, from its very beginning, which is none other than God; God as the word is understood in the New Testament, referring to the Father, the absolute Origin, the uncreated Principle, the primordial Source, not only of all things visible and invisible, but the very divinity of the Son and the Spirit, by procession. God (the Father) then gives his Son to the world, he delivers him to the world. Here the New Testament uses our verb "to deliver" to show that the Father did not spare his Son, but gave him up for us (Rom. 8:31-32), to show that the Son "gave himself up for us" (Gal. 2:20; Eph. 5:2,25), and finally that he delivered or bestowed his Spirit on John and on Mary, at the foot of the Cross, representing the Church (John 19:30).[2]

The Church has its sole source in the sending of Christ and the Holy Spirit. Its basic purpose is to continue the transmission of the Gospel.[3] Through the Holy Spirit, the Church communicates the reality of the New Covenant to all generations. This communication is Tradition.

Congar's fundamental and yet most general definition does not limit the way in which Tradition can be transmitted. Scripture, preaching, confessions of faith, sacraments and acts of worship, and even "customs" are all possible means. Congar calls these the monuments of Tradition. He also distinguishes between what he terms "objective" or "passive" and "active" and "subjective" Tradition. The former refers to the content which is transmitted. The latter refers to the act by which the "agents" of Tradition, the Church and the Holy Spirit, transmit the content. Active and passive tradition are not autonomous but two aspects of the one Tradition. "The act does not exist without its content, nor the content without the act of transmission."[4]

Tradition, for Congar, is also to be understood in a less inclusive manner. In this more narrow meaning "Tradition is the interpretation or meaning given to realities transmitted within the group to which they have been committed, a community living and sharing them."[5] In this aspect of its meaning, Tradition is distinguished from Scripture. It is the exposition of Scripture, as well as of such other "realities" as the Sacraments. Again, this interpretation is expressed in a whole series of fixed testimonies or monuments: institutions, liturgy, art, customs. It exists in every aspect of the total life of the Church.

In addition, Congar distinguishes among three different types of "traditions."

> The traditions: these are determinations ... not contained formally in the canon of Scripture. They may originate with Jesus, the apostles, or the Church, and thus may be respectively divine, apostolic, or ecclesiastical. They may be permanent or temporary in character. We may infer that, without prejudice to their dogmatic implications, their principal comcern is worship and discipline.[6]

The first of these types of tradition has as its source the teachings, actions, and examples of Jesus. An illustration is the Eucharist. It is clear, for instance, that for some thirty years Christians celebrated the breaking of bread, al-

although no written text on the matter existed. And even the earliest texts that we have give few details concerning the way in which this act of worship was performed. "It was enough for the apostles to have seen Jesus celebrate it. The Church, which had seen the apostles do it after him, thus learnt the Eucharist from its actual celebration."[7] In the traditions that have Jesus as their source, the apostles are passive recipients. They are not the origin but the transmitters of the divine revelation.

But there is a second type of tradition, which Congar calls apostolic tradition, in which the apostles are the originators. As suggested in our first quotation on traditions, apostolic traditions are primarily concerned with rules of conduct and discipline, matters of worship, and Church order. They are secondary matters which relate to the primary issues mentioned in Scripture. They are not articles of faith, although some of them, such as infant baptism, have dogmatic implications.[8]

Ecclesiastical traditions, such as the establishment of various feast days, are the third type. Their originating subject is not Jesus or the apostles but the post-apostolic Church. They are, through the assistance of the Holy Spirit, genuine expressions and developments of Tradition.[9]

These definitions should not be understood to mean that Congar is pointing to separate and unconnected realities. They are all interrelated. Tradition, in its broadest meaning, is expressed in the "sphere" to which the more specialized definition of Tradition refers. The latter in turn is manifest in the apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions.

Since Tradition is the living transmission of the Gospel in the communion of faith and worship, and since the Church must be interpreted in the framework of sacred history, the analysis of the last chapter is directly relevant to the present discussion. Tradition belongs to the time between Christ as Alpha and Christ as Omega. Permanently rooted in the once-for-all revelation of Jesus Christ, it is an inheritance. Tradition maintains and protects the deposit of faith.[10] It is a conservation of the covenant life or divine-human communion that has been established by Christ.[11]

Tradition is also a development. Because it is God's plan that the Gospel should influence not only one small segment of history but all ages, he provided Tradition as well as Scripture as means for accomplishing this purpose. And since God's design continues to unfold, Tradition develops. Scripture assures the purity of the Gospel. Tradition is needed to assure its fullness or plenitude. Sacred history continues to move towards its completion in and through Tradition.

As already indicated, the "agents" of Christ, in this missionary time between his first and second advent, are the Holy Spirit and the Church. Congar describes these as the transcendent and human subjects of Tradition--with the term "subject" pointing to the fact that the act of transmitting has a dialogical and communal structure. The Holy Spirit and the Church are the "agents" that make Tradition a living and dynamic communication of the Gospel.

The activity of the Holy Spirit as the transcendent subject of Tradition can be summarized under three headings. He is the principle of identity and unity, of indefectibility, and of life and actualization. The human subject of Tradition, the Church, has lived in a wide variety of cultures and historical periods. The subject of identity amidst all of this variety is the Holy Spirit. Within the constantly changing forces of history--in which the Church dwells--the Holy Spirit is the principle which provides continuity. And He is unchanging because while He acts upon and within the people of God, He always remains the transcendent subject of Tradition.

> In this way the identity of the Gospel, laid down once and for all but intended to fill the world, all people and the whole of history, in their infinite variety, is assured, externally, by the permanence of the form--the form of doctrine, sacraments, mission and ministries--and internally, by the personal identity of the Holy Ghost.[12]

In an almost identical manner, Congar describes the Holy Spirit as the principle of unity. As the source of communion and fellowship in sacred history, the Holy Spirit binds together the multiple and rich contribution of each individual believer and of each age of the Church in a union of love. Although each person is baptized by the same Spirit to form one Body, the gifts that are received from the Spirit are varied. Yet they all aim at building up the Church.

Secondly, the Holy Spirit as the transcendent subject of Tradition is the principle of indefectibility. This property is in no way the contribution of the human side of the Church. It is a result of the divine promise of the continuous presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church. But as was indicated previously, the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the Church is that of a covenant and not a hypostatic union. This means that the human subject of Tradition has certain abilities and obligations which it must perform. "...The human subject is left to its own freedom and responsibility within a framework of weaknesses and graces, efforts and ups-and-downs in fidelity; only the ultimate decisions about the reality of the covenant are guaranteed."[13] Although error may appear in the Church, it is certain, through the presence of the Holy Spirit, that it will not prevail.[14]

Thirdly, the Holy Spirit is the principle of actualization and life. As indicated in the previous chapter, it is the Holy Spirit who overcomes the time span between Christ and the Church as it moves down through the ages. It is through the Holy Spirit that Christ continuously acts to make his Gospel ever new--although always in continuity with the unique revelation. "The pattern of truth and life set up once and for all, and for all men, must become a personal pattern for each man, and a common pattern for untold multitudes of men leading, each one, his own individual life in space and time."[15] For this appropriation to occur, there needs to be not only a decision made by each individual but also a new act of God. This actualizing and interiorizing is the work of the Holy Spirit.[16]

It is clear that for Congar one cannot speak in an adequate manner of living Tradition apart from the dynamic work of the Holy Spirit. Neither can one adequately explicate living Tradition apart from its invisible and historical subject, that is, the Church. It is to this topic that we now turn.

In the historical dimension, each member of the Church is a responsible bearer of Tradition. This responsibility, however, is expressed in two different ways. Every Christian is to share, and witness to, the life that has been given to him in Jesus Christ. There is also the special responsibility of a teaching office. Only part of the Body of Christ has been given the second commission.

> All Christians are collectively responsible for Christianity, just as, collectively they all form a holy priesthood and spiritual fabric (cf. 1 Peter 2:5-10). They carry and transmit Christianity and the Gospel from generation to generation. Within the body of Christians, that is the Church, the hierarchy, following the apostles, have received the mandate, authority and corresponding power to keep the apostolic deposit and Gospel, and to explain them authentically. The mere

> transmission is one thing: at least in a certain way it concerns everyone; keeping judging and defining it with the authority of the Magisterium is another: it is the function of the hierarchy, comprising the college of bishops united to the pope, who is head of the college as Peter was head of the apostolic college. Collectively and organically the faithful and the hierarchy form the subject of Tradition.[17]

Obviously, Congar is affirming that the whole Church is the subject of Tradition and not just the hierarchy. The latter has been given a special role--but one which must be understood as serving the total Church and which does not eclipse the role of the laity. We must look in some detail at each of these roles and at the ways in which they are organically related to each other.

How does the laity keep and transmit Tradition? One of the ways is by creating a milieu in which a person's faith can be nourished and developed. To point up what he means by this, Congar contrasts instruction to "upbringing." The former is ~~more~~ formal and intellectually oriented. The latter is a more unconscious kind of teaching and learning, a learning through one's pores. The entire Church provides for the individual believer a type of "maternal womb."[18] It transmits a synthesis. It determines man in a "certain form of being." What he receives is not so much ideas as the make-up of his personality.

> We certainly do not wish to depreciate the part played by ideas in the strict sense, in the interior formation of conscience. What is important is that the teaching

> should reach the deeper level--beyond that at which ideas are simply understood and remembered--the level of those inner drives which are at the roots of our behaviour. This is the level that all teaching seeks to attain, but the teaching that does so in the most perfect way is that which has its origin in a direct, personal, and living communication between one morally mature or wise person and another.[19]

It is in this context that Congar affirms that the laity can transmit Tradition through the acts and gestures of its practice of the Christian faith. Such an act can bear the whole message of the Gospel, even though the person doing it may not be fully aware of all of its intellectual-theological implications.

> As simple believers we keep and transmit Tradition firstly by the acts and gestures of our practice of the Christian faith, which reveals our communion in the faith of the whole Church and of the generations that have preceded us, right back to the apostles. St. Thomas Aquinas speaks of unwritten apostolic traditions preserved in the Church's practice and transmitted as such from one baptized person to another, per succesionem fidelium. Do not image a special initiation ceremony or anything esoteric, but simply the practice of the Christian faith day in and day out, through the years until death. The faith is received by the newly-baptized baby together with life, and with the nourishment and warmth of his home. Our catechetics and sacraments rarely produce fruits that are durable where they have not grown in the atmosphere of the home. It is the Christian parents, much more than priests and preachers, who really transmit theffaith. They do it, above all, in the intimate and vital way that I have compared to upbringing as opposed to instruction.[20]

But does the laity play an active role in the theological development and formulation of the teaching of the Church? Does it have a role that goes beyond the one already described? Congar answers in the affirmative, although with certain qualifications. The laity's theological understanding is more than just a mechanical echo of the magisterium. This is why the view that holds that the laity have only a passive infallibility, in contrast to the magisterium which has an active infallibility, is inadequate. It does properly stress that the faith which the laity professes is something that they have received, "objectively determined by the preaching of those who form one single body of messengers since the time of the apostles."[21] But this formula relies too heavily upon the notion of infallibility. And it ignores the weight of historical evidence. Referring to Newman's investigation of the Arian Crisis, Congar asserts that there have been times in the history of the Church when the laity were the most active instrument of faithfulness.[22]

Congar also points out that the faithful have been involved in the development of dogma. The two most striking examples are the dogmas of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. In both of these cases, the doctrines developed through the laity's devotion and faith, which often went against the stream of theological opinion.[23]

Another way in which Congar discusses the total Church as the subject of Tradition is in reference to such closely linked expressions as the Catholic spirit (*sensus catholicus*), the spirit of the faith (*sensus fidei*), the ecclesiastical spirit (*phronema ekklesiastikon*), and the mind of the Church (*Ecclesiae Catholicae sensus* or *consensus Ecclesiae*). These expressions have both a subjective and an objective pole. Modern theology has been more concerned with the psychological and subjective aspects of knowledge. And theologians like Newman and Möhler have applied such categories as *sensus fidei* not only to the individual but to the whole community or Church. But even in these men there is no separation between the subjective and objective poles. Like the Church Fathers, they do not recognize any autonomy in the "subjective instinct" as opposed to the means in which God has chosen to reveal himself to man, such as Scripture and the Church.

The subjective-objective balance is clearly illustrated in Congar's discussion of whether it is accurate to speak of the *sensus fidei Ecclesiae* in terms of "consciousness" or "self-awareness." He suggests that it is, as long as one means by these terms not simply an intuition or awareness that the mind has of its own state or act at the present moment but also a memory of its past. In the case of the Church, the idea of consciousness must be supplemented by the affirmation that the content of which it is conscious has been received from "outside" the subject. "The Church has more than its self-awareness; it preserves and repeats the living memory of what it has received, the presence and freshness of which are continually renewed in it by its Spouse and Lord."[24]

In shifting from the role of the laity to the special role of the magisterium, we move to one of the most sensitive and crucial areas of difference between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. Protestantism has often accused Roman Catholicism of making the teaching office of the Church the primary norm of revelation. The decree of the dogma of the Assumption lent strong support to this view. And it is not difficult to find explicit formulations within Catholicism that state this position. For instance, in Humani Generis Pius XII indicates that the major role of theology is to show in what ways a doctrine that has been defined by the magisterium is contained in Scripture and the monuments of Tradition.[25] Heiko Oberman, a Protestant scholar, has stated that the task of a theologian, in such a view, is to read the latest doctrinal decisions back into the major sources of the faith.[26] Eisegesis replaces exegesis. Scripture and the monuments of Tradition become simply a repository of proof-texts, which, when needed, can be drawn upon by the contemporary magisterium. The question we must ask is: how does Congar respond to this type of criticism? Does he consider the Protestant critique to adequately reflect the Roman Catholic understanding of the authority and functions of the magisterium?

Central to Congar's position is the fact that has already been mentioned, namely, that the magisterium does have a special role and one that is rooted in the very heart of the divine economy. As Jesus was sent with authority, so the apostles were sent to continue his work. And in turn those who succeeded them also have been given the authority to teach. "...All the faithful receive light and are active, but this is through the knowledge received from the apostolic word and set in order by the apostolic authority."[27] The authority of the magisterium is not given to it by the congregation but is received from Christ. Although the whole Church is the subject of Tradition, the magisterium is the subject in a special way, by which it contributes to, and serves, the total congregation.[28] It is granted the charism which allows it to perform its three-fold role of keeping faithfully, judging authentically, and defining infallibly the content of the deposit of faith.

The foremost duty of the magisterium is to be a faithful witness to the biblical revelation.[29] With this emphasis, Congar utilizes his basic distinction between the "time of revelation" and the "time of the Church." The former ended with the death of the last apostle. Revelation does not continue down through the course of history.

> Revelation is a deposit; the Church can become progressively conscious of this object and realize a progressive development. But it will not add anything which is objectively foreign to it. If there are in the Church, and all the

> course of its history, "revelations," they do not add anything objectively to the knowledge of the mystery of God, or or else they are "illuminations" given to the hierarchy, to the Fathers, or the whole Church for a new and more profound comprehension of what has already been revealed.... This is why in the continuity of "tradition," understood in the sense of revealed teaching transmitted by the Church, there is a place for making a distinction between traditio constitutiva, which is the revelation-teaching of the prophets, of Christ, and the apostles, and traditio continuativa, and finally, the measure that indicates the fact of doctrinal development, traditio explicativa which is ... the conservation, the explanation and development by the Church of the deposit.[30]

As a result, the teaching office, from the point of view of the object of faith, has no autonomy. It is entirely ruled and measured by the deposit of revelation.[31]

The second part of the magisterium's role is to judge. Congar compares the history of the Church to a river that "carries" a bit of everything. Down through the centuries the pure has been mixed with the impure, the permanent with the transient, the important with the trivial. Consequently, there is a need to distinguish the significant from the insignificant, and to classify or rank the various "elements" of Tradition. Only in this way can Tradition be of value as a "teacher" in the present. And while the laity can make certain judgments, only the magisterium has been given the special grace by which it can reach a judgment sufficiently clear, unanimous, or capable of imposing itself.[32]

The final part of the magisterium's role is to define belief, and when necessary to promulgate it in the form of dogma, that is, in a form which is legally binding. These are always subordinate tasks to that of guarding the deposit of faith. The primary reason the Church performs these tasks is to safeguard the apostolic witness. The Church defines and promulgates in order to preserve, against opposition, the purity of the Gospel.

> It is not one of its "ordinary" tasks, but is termed "extraordinary", which, according to the Fathers, is only exercised when the Magisterium is forced to by the threat to the Church, brought about by a nascent heresy. It is a fearful obligation. St. Hilary, who suffered exile for resisting an emperor favouring Arianism, was as deeply aware of the difficulty and hazards of any attempt at dogmatic formulation as he was of the depth of meaning of the mystery to which he bore such faithful witness: "We are forced by the blasphemous errors of heretics to do what is forbidden; to scale the heights, to express the ineffable, to dare to touch the unattainable.... We are forced to imprison indescribable things within the weakness of our language ... and in expressing it, to surrender to the dangers of the human word that should have been kept and worshipped in our hearts...."[33]

But what about the Dogma of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary? It was not provoked by any threat of heresy. It would seem to fall outside the criterion that Congar gives for defining and promulgating Dogma. Congar does not directly address this problem. However he does suggest a secondary reason for the magisterium to define belief. Dogmas also have a liturgical and doxological function. They fulfill the need of the Church to confess unanimously its faith.[34] Presumably, the Dogma of the Assumption fits into this secondary category.

In all of this, Congar is developing a position that stands in opposition to the theory that Tradition can be identified with the contemporary magisterium. We have already cited a passage from Humani Generis which makes this second claim. Another example is a statement by G. Filograssi. "Rome speaks: and that is enough for all Christians ... to accept the truth, thus proclaimed, in the obedience of faith, without having to go back to the sources whence the Church draws this truth."[35] Such views tend to make the teaching office of the Church into an autonomous norm of theology. They put the post-apostolic Church on the same level as the apostolic Church. They fail to take into account that the apostles were inspired while the magisterium is only assisted by the Holy Spirit.[36] In addition, the magisterium's primary activity of guarding is superseded by the secondary one of defining. It is forgotten that without its source the teaching office is a channel without life-giving water. And quite importantly, such understandings of Tradition reduce the reality of the Christian faith to that which has been expressed in Dogma. It ignores such other important monuments of Tradition as the Church Fathers and the liturgy. The tendency is to dwell only upon decrees of the Councils, and statements made by the popes.[37] Congar argues against all of these contractions by advocating an understanding of Tradition that emphasizes that the magisterium is always dependent upon the "time of revelation," and that the whole Church, throughout space and time, is the subject of Tradition and not just the teaching office--although again it must be underlined that the magisterium has been given a special role and the necessary divine gifts to fulfill its function.

Instead of seeing any of these aspects of Tradition as being in opposition to each other, Congar again draws upon the concept of communion, or upon the Body of Christ with its various "members" having different tasks. Between the "time of revelation" and the "time of the Church," and between the magisterium and the laity there is a type of symphonic unity. Rather than being in conflict, the various aspects of the historical subject of Tradition complement one another.[38]

The role of the teaching office of the Church in defining Tradition raises perhaps the most persistently perplexing problem for modern Roman Catholicism, namely, the relationship between historical inquiry and the teaching authority of the Church. This problem, at different periods, has taken various forms. Sometimes it has centered upon the question of the use of the historical-critical method of interpreting Scripture. Other times it has been expressed in the issue of whether the Dogma of the Church is in agreement with Scripture. In still other instances it has been a question of whether or not the Church in any significant sense should be open to, and instructed by, the course of historical events and developments.

The problem of history was dealt with by such men as Möhler, Newman, Döllinger, and Acton, but the issue came to a critical point during the crisis of Modernism. At this time, Roman Catholicism decisively rejected a purely historical approach to the formation and evaluation of theological subjects. It denied that the historian, as historian, with his autonomous tools, could be the final arbitrator of the Church's understanding of its faith. But as suggested in the first chapter, the issue of history has again surfaced within Catholicism.[39]

Congar's response to this pivotal issue follows quite closely the position of Maurice Blondel (1861-1949), who first developed his stance on the matter of history during the Modernist crisis.[40] Blondel criticized what he considered to be the extreme of historicism and extrinsicism, the reduction of dogma to what can be validated by historical inquiry and the basic ignoring of history. He considered both of these to be false abstractions. Through a concept of Tradition he formulated a middle way. And Congar has followed him both in his rejection of the two extremes and in the means of seeking a positive solution.

In Congar's view, if one looks at the textual sources of the Christian faith from a purely historical point of view one finds that sacred history has a paratactic quality.

> History is a science of mankind's past. Tradition is something else entirely. Historical tradition has its fragmentary and uncertain elements: there are gaps, vacillations, uncertainties, perhaps even contradictions, of which writers like Loisy, Guigenbert, and Turmel, especially, would be quick to take advantage. Almost all dogmas, and many parts of the Bible, give rise to similar difficulties.[41]

The opposite approach, that of using history only in a superficial or secondary way, is equally unsatisfactory. It ignores the fact that theology must be rooted in sacred history. And it implies that the teaching authority of the Church in its forming of Dogma is not dependent upon historical witnesses.[42]

The "link" between historical inquiry and dogmatic formulations is Tradition.

> The transition from the material aspect of the historical evidence to the definitions of faith, which is contested by the purely rational criticism in the name of historicity, is actually affected by a living synthesis in which all the forces of the Christian spirit play their part: speculation, ethics, history... and this is Tradition.[43]

Dogma is based on God's revelation in history. But this history can be read, in the final analysis, only with the eyes of the Church. A purely historical approach is inadequate.

> It [dogma] has support in historical documentation, but the human bases of faith always have their unsatisfactory elements; they are always of such a nature that the

> negative thesis is never quite without some argumentative force. The human resources utilized by this supernatural reality to give it genuine support but it does not derive its solidity from these, posessing as it does its own proper validity and consistency. It demands and implies such support, but has its own proper "order," as Pascal would call it.[44]

Besides being derived from history, dogma has an additional source: "The experience of an ever-present reality to which the documents bear witness at their own level and in their own way."[45] Because there is a supernatural origin to revelation, and because the Holy Spirit is present and at work in all the activity of the Church, there is an aspect of the Church's interpretation of its faith that is beyond the sphere of historical reason and inquiry.[46] Historical research must have its word, but not the final one.

The results of research are the human guarantee that the Church is being faithful to Scripture and Tradition. In order not just to follow the habitual or to be seduced by the merely novel, the Church encourages scholarship in order that it can discern, and be faithful to, its authentic Tradition.[47] At the same time, the service of the scholar takes place within the context of the Church.

> The positive theologian begins therefore, as such, by receiving before furnishing, listening before speaking. He will furnish much and his voice must be understood; but his contribution will not be that of something heterogeneous to the tradition of the Church; his voice will not teach to the latter anything other than its own witness.[48]

Since the Church has other resources than historical ones, the historian must recognize his dependence upon the magisterium. The successio doctorum is always subservient to the successio episcoporum as the custodian of the deposit of faith. Nonetheless, the magisterium must also be open to the work of the scholar. Truth is not divided. But, in this earthly state, it is often seen in a fragmented manner. The result is that terrible problems of contradiction arise. The Church must remember this. It must not drive scholars away. It needs them. It must constantly be conscious of the fact that even from a pastoral point of view, it is the mother of scholars just as much as it is the mother of the ignorant.[49]

Before we consider a vital issue for the Protestant theologian, namely the way in which Congar explicates the relationship between Scripture and Tradition, we must examine two other areas of Congar's thought which are closely related to this matter. These are the connection between Tradition and its monuments, and the manner in which one can accurately speak of the development of Tradition.

Tradition is "living" Tradition because it exists within the living organism of the Church and because it is constantly "enlivened" by the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit. For this reason, Tradition can never be identified with its "lifeless" monuments.

> ...The monuments of Tradition are objective historical realities; but Tradition is a theological reality which supposes an action of the Holy Spirit in a living subject, and this subject is the Church, the People of God and the Body of Christ. A Treatise on Tradition which ignored God's continuous "inspiration" of the Church, in the

> standard sense given to this word by a long succession of authors, would be utterly useless. This divine action is constitutive of Tradition, and any usage which reduces this term to a simple designation of historical documents would be inadequate and even ambiguous. However, "tradition" is often used to mean a collection of historically verifiable witnesses; this is the case not only with the classical Probatur ex Traditione of the manuals, but also with the official declarations of the magisterium.[50]

Just as Protestantism has refused to completely identify the Word of God with Scripture, so Congar is convinced that Tradition should never be equated with the monuments in which it has been expressed.

Yet the Church must always pay careful attention to the monuments of Tradition. They are a continuous source of nourishment and a norm of the life of the Church. Since the post-apostolic Church is not the recipient of new revelation, it remains dependent upon the monumants in which the once-for-all revelation has been expressed and conserved.

> It is obvious that the documents which expressed this message at the beginning, and continuously through the centuries since then, are a special means of knowing what has always been believed and what was delivered in the first place. With regard to this beginning the apostolic documents, that is, the writings of the New Testament, constitute an unparalleled source of knowledge. Their value is absolute and unquestionable, at least from a negative point of view, in that whatever is contradicted by them definitely and without question could not belong to the revealed deposit. Thus, in a wider setting than its role as nourishment for the faith and sacrament of salvation by faith, Scripture plays a critical role with regard to every affirmation claimed within the Church.

> It is the rule to which all preaching, worship, devotion and doctrinal development should be referred. With certain reservations, a similar judgment could be passed on the other monuments of Tradition: the liturgy, the writings of the Fathers, the early canons and constitutions, all different expressions of the Church's faith. The purely dogmatic texts enjoy a favoured position, as has been said; the others represent a whole scale of authority, but at a deeper level than their semi-juridical revealing the image of the early Church, whose faithful descendent we are, or strive to be.[51]

As indicated, the monuments of Tradition are not all of equal importance or value. Scripture is the primary one. It is followed by the teachings of the *magisterium*, the liturgy, the Fathers, the discipline of the Church, including the lives of the saints, and the theologians.

Because their importance next to Scripture is universally accepted within Roman Catholicism, Congar does not dwell on the value of the texts of the *magisterium*. He simply reaffirms this position.[52] But if it is accurate to state that Congar does not want to subtract from the significance of the texts of the *magisterium*, it is also valid to indicate that he wants more strongly to underline the other kinds of monuments than has frequently been the case in Roman Catholic theology. As an example, we will look at the way in which Congar treats the liturgy as a monument of Tradition.

A major reason for the importance of the liturgy as a monument is that it communicates the Gospel in a very different way from written expressions of Tradition.

> Everything turns on the fact that the liturgy is not just a theoretical or notional statement, but sacred action. This action or activity is synthetic, incorporating and expressing a conviction, and at the same time developing it and conveying it to others. The liturgy is not a manual, working with clear concepts and definitions: it procures entry into the Christian truths by way of prayer and actions, by familiar signs expressing men's faithfulness and love. The entry into these truths is not by way of discussion or argument, but through the intimacy of living experience. "We need to feed slowly upon things themselves, rather than upon the explanations of things." For the Church, the liturgy is not a dead monument, a kind of Pantheon to be visited as one visits a museum, but a home which is always lived in, the conditioning envelope or atmosphere of its whole life.[53]

The liturgy is communicated in a more fundamental manner than an intellectual statement of belief. It has its own way of teaching. To refer to the categories mentioned earlier, the liturgy is a source of "upbringing" rather than "instruction." At its deepest level, life in the New Covenant is learned by actively participating in it.[54]

A second important characteristic of the liturgy as a monument of Tradition--as indicated in the above quotation--is that its acts are highly synthetic in character. They have a unique ability to recapitulate the entire Gospel. "The whole of our love is expressed in the liturgical kiss, even if we do not really attend sufficiently to what we are doing. The whole of our faith is in the most ordinary sign of the cross, and when we say 'Our Father' we already imply all the knowledge which will be given to us when we embrace it in the revelation of glory."[55] The believer may not conceptually comprehend all of the theological implications of the act of celebration in which he is involved--and no one fully comprehends them--and yet he participates in the reality of the New Covenant.[56]

A third characteristic of the liturgy as an expression of Tradition is that it plays a crucial role in the Church's interpretation of Scripture. The liturgy itself is woven out of scriptural texts and allusions. They are not strung together indiscriminately or haphazardly in the liturgy, but are harmoniously united in a Christological center. In this manner, the liturgy immerses the worshipper in the meaning of salvation history.

> The liturgy has inherited the information he communicated to his disciples. Its manner of quoting and interpreting the texts is consonant and in agreement with that of the Fathers, of the apostles and of Jesus himself: and like this last it is typological. It seeks its norms of action in the major and unchanging principles of God's action, among the examples that reveal his mode of action, presented throughout the whole of sacred history and the Scriptures. So that, if Tradition in its dogmatic foundation is an interpretation of Scripture continuing that of Christ and the apostles, the liturgy is truly the holy ark containing sacred Tradition at its most intense. It communicates the spirit of Christ as the radiant centre of the whole history of salvation, without ever separating him from the Church and the saints, which are his field of influence.[57]

There is always the danger that the liturgy will become not an expression of Tradition but of traditional*ism*.

Liturgical acts can easily become mechanical and routine gestures. They can become dissociated from their source in Christ and their purpose of quickening the hearts of men, and quickly sag into irrelevancy and caricature. Congar is aware that the history of the Church is full of such unfortunate occasions. But these distortions do not distract from the fact that the liturgy is uniquely apt for the sharing of the reality of the divine-human covenant with the Church, and, through it, with the world. "Like the Word, which it includes and takes up, the liturgy is the means by which Christ, who dwells in it and acts in it as Priest, King, and Prophet, perfects and completes in mankind that new creation which he instituted in his sacred transitus."[58]

When we turn to the question of development, we find that in Tradition there is both conservation and progression. As already indicated, the one-for-all character of the revelation of Christ demands preservation in order that in its purity it can be passed on throughout space and time. But during "the time of the Church" the implications of this deposit of faith are gradually unfolded. The objective pole of revelation does not change. There is no development of the revelation that has been given to the Church. Throughout history, the Gospel remains unaltered. It is the subjective pole that deepens and expands its understanding.[59]

Any theory of development rests upon a particular notion of revelation. If revelation is seen to be primarily the communication of propositions, it is adequate to speak of development in terms of making explicit what is already implicitly contained in theological statements. However, if revelation is seen to be a covenant relationship, as we have seen to be the case with Congar, such an a-historical understanding of development is inadequate. He suggests that there are three basic reasons for a more dynamic and historical theory of development.

The first reason is that faith is not just an act of God in man. As we saw in some detail in the previous chapter, it is also a living response on the part of man. The Word of God, like the love of God, evokes man's creative answer.[60] And this reply takes form not only in dogmatic propositions--such as the position that equates revelation with theological statements suggests--but in worship and in those daily actions which reflect and convey the Gospel.

The second reason is that the individual Christian and the Church exist in history. By revealing himself within history, God has entered into the conditions of history. God's Kingdom and his salvation do not float along above the earth. They are within it--and develop within it.[61] At this level, the Church and its individual members are subject to the same limitations and possibilities as all other human institutions. For instance, Congar suggests that there is a continuum of knowledge which spans time. A certain progress and development occurs in "secular" history.[62] The Church as the human subject of Tradition exists within this same historical context, and this fact must be taken into serious consideration in any theory of development.

The third reason, and the most significant, is the one that has already been suggested, namely that the design of sacred history is one which unfolds or develops. There is a progressive movement which leads up to the establishment of the New Covenant in Christ, and there is also a progressive movement from the establishment of this covenant to its conclusion. As was observed in the discussion of the Church as the _pleroma_ of Christ, the incorporation of the authentic aspects of new historical periods and new cultures into the Body of Christ adds to its richness.[63]

Because the development of Tradition reflects the unfolding of the Kingdom, or the movement from Christ as Alpha to Christ as Omega, Congar describes the former on the same implicit-explicit model that he uses in describing the latter. Again, Congar does not primarily mean by this a logical-mathematical type of development, although he does admit that doctrines can develop in this manner.[64] Rather he basically means a historical development--the moving onwards towards a conclusion of the design of God. This is illustrated by the four causes of development that he suggests. Only the first one strictly falls within the category of a logical development. In it, faith seeks further understanding by inquiring into a particular aspect of doctrine and then relating it to others, such as the procession of the Holy Spirit in its relation to the other two Persons of the Trinity.

In the other three causes of development, theological reasoning receives its impetus from "historical" pressures. The second cause of development is the encounter of heresy. It is because of the various heretical threats that the Church has been forced more adequately to define those areas of doctrine which have been challenged. In the course of history, the Church, through combating opposition, has become more purely itself. The third cause of development is the life of obedience and the devotion of the Church. It involves a living, and thus a historical, conformity to Christ and not a purely intellectual analysis and construction. Devotion and action need to be controlled by doctrine. But they, in turn, enrich the Church's understanding of its faith. This is why the _magisterium_ must take into account the _sensus fidelium_. The final cause is the events of the world, in contrast to sacred history. This is evident within Scripture itself when, for example, the strong universalism of Isaiah arose precisely during that time when Israel was caught up in the turbulant events of _Weltgeschichte_.[65]

Of course, the Church does not respond blindly to these four causes. Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it judges them. The _magisterium_ has the responsibility of guarding the deposit of faith. But it is also obligated to be open to the new questions and problems which arise in history and to the new promptings of the Holy Spirit.

In order to understand the full significance of Congar's formulation of the relationship between Scripture, Tradition, and the Church, it is necessary to indicate the Council of Trent's discussion on this subject. Trent declared that the saving truth of the Gospel is contained in both written books (Scripture) and in the unwritten traditions.[66] Originally the statement read that the truth was contained "partly in written books, partly in unwritten traditions."[67] In general, Roman Catholic theology since Trent has interpreted the final formulation in light of the first, and has consequently maintained that there are two sources or revelation, Scripture and Tradition. In the nineteenth century, there were a handful of theological dissenters--Johann Kuhn, Möhler, and Newman--who upheld the sufficiency of the content of Scripture.[68] However, it has only been in recent times that the adequacy of this predominant interpretation of Trent's statement has been significantly thrown into historical and theological question.[69] With this re-evaluation the relationship between Scripture and Tradition has been opened once again. Congar's formulation is to be seen as one of the attempts to look at this issue in a new manner, one which goes beyond the usual polemical situation of Protestantism affirming sola Scriptura and Roman Catholicism affirming two equal sources of revelation, Scripture and Tradition.

Congar upholds the "absolute value" of Scripture. And this affirmation raises the key question of its relationship to Tradition and traditions. He indicates that the Protestant principle of sola Scriptura is correct in suggesting that Scripture has an absolute value which Tradition does not. The former is the supreme guide to which all other norms must be subjected. "If Tradition or the magisterium claimed to teach something contradicting the holy Scriptures, it would certainly be false, and the faithful ought to reject it. Scripture is always the supreme rule and is never submitted to any other objective rule."[70] However, it is not the sole rule in regulating the Church's doctrine and life. It works in harmony with two other principles which have been established for this purpose by God, namely, Tradition and the Church.

Another way Congar maintains Scripture as a unique norm is to assert its material sufficiency. Scripture contains all the truths necessary for salvation. Scripture and Tradition are not two independent material sources of revelation but two different means of communicating the one Gospel. The whole Gospel is in both channels of transmission.[71]

What then does Tradition contribute to the doctrine and life of the Church that is not contributed by Scripture? Most importantly, Tradition and the Church as its historical subject provide the context within which Scripture can be properly interpreted. Outside of it, Scripture is just a collection of historically important books. Within it, the "bare" text becomes the living Word of God. The Church is the "locus" or "place" in which there is "a scriptural instinct," for it is here that the Holy Spirit has been active down through the ages and is presently active.

Congar considers the history of Protestantism to be a good illustration of what happens when it is believed that Scripture provides its own principle of interpretation. This view which has claimed scripture as the sole norm has in fact fostered an unending number of denominations. These denominations have supported the principle of sola Scriptura. But they have interpreted Scripture in a vast multitude of ways. The one norm has become, in practice, many norms.[72]

Only the type of synthesis which Tradition provides is capable of bringing together the diverse theological witnesses contained in Scripture into a harmonious unity.

> Minus Tradition, we would only possess a collection of more or less disparate witnesses: Paulinism, a "primitive christology", the Johannine writings, a Synoptic eschatology, the eschatology of Paul or John, etc., but not revelation as a single whole. Consistently applied, Scriptura sola would hardly lead to the unity which the teaching of the faith requires in order to be received into the mind, still less could it serve as the principle of unity for a Church.[73]

As we observed above, the Church has a knowledge of the Gospel which is not based on a purely scientific reading of the text. The Tradition of the Church teaches the faithful to live by the totality and comprehensiveness of God's plan. And it is only as Scripture is brought back into this living context that it can be authentically interpreted.

Protestant theology has generally been critical of any hermeneutic of Scripture whibh places it under the tutelage of the Church. It has held that such an approach opens the way for the Church to eclipse the Word of God. Barth, for instance, has suggested that Möhler's concept of Tradition as the living Church identifies Christ and the Church.[74] He undoubtedly would raise essentially the same criticism about Congar. For Barth, modern developments in the area of papal infallibility and Mariology are seen as evidence that the Tradition of the Church--and particularly the teaching authority--has taken an equal place within Scripture. as the norm of faith. Barth, of course, does not deny the value of Tradition. He suggests and demonstrates in his writings that the theologians of the past must be respected. The contemporary theologian must listen to and understand them. Likewise, he sees a Church confession to be "a first commentary on Holy Scripture."[75] Yet Tradition always has only a relative authority.[76]

How does Congar respond to this type of criticism? He denies, as we have seen, that the magisterium has any fundamental autonomy with regard to the deposit of faith, and especially Scripture. "If the magisterium elucidates Scripture, it first always submits itself to Scripture and must be ready to receive from it.[77] The magisterium is only a channel by which revelation is presented to the Church as a whole as a rule of faith. The point where he differs is that he affirms two norms of revelation, Scripture and Tradition. Again, Tradition has no autonomy over Scripture. The time of the Church always remains dependent upon the time of the apostles. Contemporary Tradition is always the traditio *continuativa* and *explicativa* of the *traditio constitutiva*.[78]

At the same time, Congar is convinced that the synthesis which living Tradition provides gives the Church an "analogy of faith" by which it is able to discern the truths which are only implicit within Scripture.

> This phrase [analogy of faith]... is taken to mean the proportion and relationships existing between the parts themselves with one another, or between all the parts and their common centre, which we may call the revelation of the covenant relation in Christ, the centre of the Christian mystery. This analogy of faith exists at the level of the dogmas or articles of faith. It is, thus, one of the main resources of theology. It exists also at the level of the scriptural texts and is in this way one of the main principles of theologico-biblical hermeneutics. This principle rests on the essential oneness of the Word of God, the covenant plan it communicates to us, and the unity that follows from this for Scripture.[79]

It is by the use of analogy of faith that light can be thrown on more obscure and implicit areas of Scripture. Through developing the vital connections between various aspects of sacred history by referring them to their Christological center, the Church is able to discover relationships which are not explicitly in Scripture but which appear possible and even necessary.[80] This is the case with such "new" doctrines as the Immaculate Conception as the Assumption of Mary.[81] No doctrine can develop in opposition to Scripture, since it provides an absolute and unquestionable negative test. But within this boundary, positive development can be expected to occur.[82]

Scripture is materially sufficient, but it is not a formally sufficient norm. It is always complemented by the Church and Tradition. Scripture does not yield its own true meaning. It must be interpreted within the Church and its living Tradition. These three "means" for the contribution of God's redemptive plan must be harmoniously held together. When separated from each other, they become insufficient, and even inconsistent. But, in reality, they entail one another, for all three are under the active influence of the Holy Spirit. They are an interrelated means of bringing the contemporary age into contact with the once-for-all revelation of Jesus Christ.

Scripture is dependent upon both Tradition and the Church. Form criticism has pointed out that Tradition proceeded and is contained in Scripture. The Church in turn established the canon, or recognized it and made it into Church law. And, as we have seen in detail, the Bible can only be read in the context of these other two "means." Tradition is dependent upon the Church and Scripture. The Church is the locus in which Tradition is conserved and in which it develops. Scripture is its fixed guide. And the Church fulfills its mission only with the aid of Scripture and Tradition. They are the Channels of its life in Christ. They are the standards by which it always judges itself.[83]

In brief, Congar rejects the separation of Tradition from Scripture that is implied in the Tridentine formula. By treating Scripture and "traditions" as two independent sources, Trent's statement, or at least the generally accepted understanding of it, tended to divide and even oppose these two realities. By moving from understanding them as two sources to seeing them as two ways of communicating the one Gospel, and by discussing the total reality of Tradition instead of just "traditions," Congar forms the basis on which he considers them to be in harmony with each other. And obviously, he simultaneously points out what he considers to be the inherent weakness in the Protestant principle of sola Scriptura.

Congar's interpretation of Tradition raises many issues for Protestant theology. The two questions that were posed at the end of the preceding chapter, namely whether Congar has an organismic view of history and whether he gives too much status to the "time of the Church," are directly relevant to the present subject. Other closely related questions also present themselves. Does Congar not follow, in his acceptance of the Marian dogmas for instance, Newman's theory of judging the "earlier" (Scripture) by the "later" (Tradition)? The Protestant, while admitting that one only moves back to the primary witness through the secondary ones, will want to uphold that the "earlier" is always the norm of the "later" and not vice versa.[84] The Protestant theologian, as we saw to be the case with Barth, is almost invariably wary that later "developments" will replace or rival Scripture.

Another issue that the Protestant would want to pursue is whether Congar has taken into sufficient account the possibility of the Church in its various traditions deviating from the Tradition. In spite of his careful argument that the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the Church is in the form of a covenant and not a hypostatic union, the problem still remains as to whether Congar does not too readily identify the history of the Church with the activity of the Holy Spirit. He also will want to affirm the Holy Spirit's transcendence and freedom. He will assert that it is possible for the "Church," through sin, to cease to be guided by the Holy Spirit and thus fall victim to mere traditionalism or innovation.[85]

The underlying difference between Congar and Protestant theology on these matters is based on different understandings of the nature of the Church. As we proceed in the next chapters to other aspects of his ecclesiology, we will be able to gain further insight into the way in which Congar deals with these issues. At that point, we will be able to respond to his total position.

Notes to Chapter III

[1] Congar, Tradition and Traditions, p. 235.

[2] Yves Congar, O. P., The Meaning of Tradition, trans. by A. N. Woodrow (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1964), p. 15.

[3] Congar suggests that the Gospel has a poetic and a dynamic aspect. It gives knowledge and produces an effect. It brings to light what has been hidden. It also produces "change." The Gospel is not only the announcement of salvation but the dynamic and living power of salvation. "The New Testament notion of Gospel, used by the texts and symbols we have gathered from the Fathers, in the baptismal liturgy and the early Christian art, takes 'Gospel' in the fullest extent of its meaning, as holiness." (Congar, Tradition and Traditions, p. 282.) As we proceed in our analysis, important implications in this position will become apparent. We shall just note two of them here. Gospel is the one source of the Christian faith, and it in turn is expressed in both Scripture and Tradition. The Gospel is present when and where Christ is present and actively communicating the benefits of his life, and this means that the Gospel, and hence Tradition, cannot be reduced to a written text.

[4] Congar, Tradition and Traditions, p. 297.

[5] Ibid., p. 288.

[6] Ibid., p. 287.

[7] Congar, The Meaning of Tradition, p. 22.

[8] Examples of this second kind of tradition mentioned by the Church Fathers are: "The Lenten fast: St. Irenaeus, St. Jerome, St. Leo; Certain baptismal rites: Tertullian, Origen, St. Basil, St. Jerome, St. Augustine; Certain eucharistic rites: Origen, St. Cyprian (water added to the wine in the chalice), St. Basil; Infant baptism: Origen, St. Augustine; Certain rules for the election and consecration of bishops: St. Cyprian; The sign of the cross: St. Basil; Prayer for the dead: St. John Cyrosostom; Various liturgical feasts and rites: St. Basil, St. Augustine." (Ibid., p. 39. Cf. Congar, Tradition and Traditions, pp.50-64.

[9] Congar is not disturbed by the criticism that the apostolic traditions have been so mixed with ecclesiastical ones that they are no longer distinguishable. While there is a hierarchy of value among the Dominical, the apostolic, and ecclesiastical traditions, there are no sharp boundaries.

Congar stresses continuity among them rather than discontinuity. And he sees no problem in the fact that the "form" has been added, in a number of instances, at a later time to an original apostolic intention. "The identity is less one of exterior form than of inspiration or general direction, maintained throughout later history by the Holy Spirit who guides the faithful so that they should preserve the deposit, and understand its meaning." (Ibid., p. 289.) He does acknowledge that one cannot circumvent historical inquiry on this subject. But he believes that it is the consensus of contemporary historical studies that there is more and more probability that the liturgical practices and the discipline of the post-apostolic Church have apostolic origins. And as suggested, there is the gift of the assistance of the Holy Spirit which assures that the Church--at every point in its history--will not defect from its Source.

[10] The concept "deposit of faith' tends to carry with it the connotation that revelation is a series of propositional truths. As one would expect from his emphasis upon dialogue, covenant, and communion, Congar rejects this view. (Congar, La foi et la théologie, p. 44.) Since the Gospel cannot be reduced to a text (Scripture) such an interpretation of this phrase misses the dynamic and living quality of revelation. "It is true that what flows afresh in the transmitting channel comes entirely from the original and unique source, which we know to be Jesus Christ and his saving Gospel. This is an absolute and unequivocal fact. But this source is not restricted to the content of a text; it is an ever-active Reality, alive in the Church. The deposit in its primitive documentary form is not the sole principle responsible for the value of what is communicated two, ten or twenty centuries later. A life-force, wholly governed by the deposit and produced in living, spiritual beings by the Spirit of life himself, transforms the channel into a sort of source with regard to what it transmits." (Congar, The Meaning of Tradition, p. 114.) Congar utilizes the concept because it points to the fact revelation has been once-for-all completed in Christ, and that the Church is always ruled and measured by it. However, in a way that will be clarified as we proceed, he does speak of implicit elements in the deposit of faith later becoming explicit. This is based on that organismic aspect of his interpretation of sacred history that was discussed in the preceding chapter. But even so, this development must be seen on a dynamic-living model and not on a deductive-propositional one.

[11] Congar, Tradition and Traditions, pp. 240-42.

[12] Congar, The Meaning of Tradition, p. 54.

[13] Congar, Tradition and Traditions, pp. 312-13.

[14] Congar believes that Roman Catholic theology has not given sufficient emphasis to the concept of indefectibility, particularly in comparison with the notion of infallibility. Indefectibility applies to the guarding and keeping of the Word, to the constant faithfulness of the Church. Infallibility applies to specific acts by which the Church expresses the faith. (Congar, La foi et la théologie, p. 157.) More adequately than infallibility, indefectibility suggests that all that occurs during the pilgrimage of the Church is not the work of the Holy Spirit. "This is why I think it necessary to restore alongside the notion of infallibility, which has been, especially since the nineteenth century, too frequently and abundantly employed, the notion of indefectibility. A certain number of the Church's *acts*, or acts of the pope who personifies it, are infallible. It cannot be said, without qualification, of the pope and the Church that they *are* infallible. But infallibility is assured to certain acts of which they are the subject, and no one can say, with the Vatican Council, that the pope is infallible *when*....These acts occur sometimes at the end of a period of research or of a struggle full of uncertainties, of which history can provide more than one example." (Congar, Tradition and Traditions, p. 313.)

[15] Ibid., p. 342.

[16] Congar, The Meaning of Tradition, p. 54.

[17] Ibid., p. 62.

[18] "Is it not specifically the woman's task to create the milieu in which human life will retain its vital warmth: the womb, maternal tendencies, the home? She is the 'mother of all living' (Gen. 3:20); it is woman who receives, conceives and forms life. Man is committed more to productive work and activity; woman is closer to the sources of life, and more immediately devoted to its fostering. She instinctively translates what man expresses logically and carries out in labour into terms of life. Man is vowed to the hazards and wounds of struggle in the outside world, continually changing, given to adventure; in woman's fidelity he finds one who waits, guards and preserves intact the warmth and intimacy of the home." (Congar, Tradition and Traditions, p. 373.)

[19] Ibid., p. 372.

[20] Congar, The Meaning of Tradition, pp. 70-71.

[21] Congar, Tradition and Traditions, p. 326.

[22] Congar, Lay People in the Church, p. 286.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 287. Cf. *The Meaning of Tradition*, p. 74; *Tradition and Traditions*, p. 327. For further elaboration of the laity's theological role, see Chapter Four.

[24] Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, p. 320.

[25] "It is also true that theologians must always return to the sources of divine revelation: for it belongs to them to point out how the doctrine of the living Teaching Authority is to be found either explicitly or implicitly in the Scriptures and in Tradition." (Pope Pius XII, *Humani Generis*, p. 10.)

[26] Heiko A. Oberman, "The Protestant Tradition," in *The Convergence of Traditions*, ed. by Elmer O'Brien, S.J. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), p. 109.

[27] Congar, *Lay People in the Church*, p. 274.

[28] "There was here, then, and there is still, a particular title for assuring the conservation and passing on of the truth. This is not a simple title of a deposit by which we live, but that of a mission in the full sense, a mandate which is received together with the resources necessary for its fulfilment. That the Lord did give to the Church, his people, this structure which is at once one of community and of hierarchy, is clear from the fact, already indicated, that God does not reveal the saving truth to each person individually, but has made a unique, collective and public communication of it. He has entrusted its transmission or dissemination to a group of messengers, in which the succession of chosen agents, rendered necessary by their mortal nature, does not detract from the essential oneness of the mission." (Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, p. 329.)

[29] "The first function of the Magisterium is one of witness; by the apostolic succession, which is evidently something more than a material continuity sanctioned ritually, the episcopate enters into the unity of mission, ...and becomes a unique witness-bearer, whose unity overcomes the vicissitudes and transience of time, as well as distance and space." (Congar, *The Meaning of Tradition*, p. 63.)

[30] Yves Congar, "Theologie" in *Dictionnaire de Theologie Catholique*, XIV, p. 465.

[31] Congar, *La foi et la théologie*, pp. 43-45.

[32] Congar, *The Meaning of Tradition*, p. 65.

[33] *Ibid.*, pp. 65-66.

[34] Congar, *La foi et la théologie*, pp. 61, 71.

[35] Quoted in Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, p. 423.

[36] "Even when he 'inspired' the Prophets or St. Paul, for example, God moved the mind and will of his messengers without doing violence to them, illuminating them from within. But this was a positive intervention, something from beyond themselves; he *added* something not contributed by man. But, with 'assistance,' he leaves men to their own resources; they have to seek and find for themselves. His part in the affair is simply that of so conducting matters that what *men* have found, deliberated on and expressed, shall have *His* guarantee, which is that of absolute Truth." (Congar, *Report from Rome*, Vol. I., pp. 64-65.)

[37] "In this respect it may be noted that to reduce this formal Tradition to the *magisterium* ... is to risk depriving it of much of its vigour. It is, in fact, to risk reducing it purely to its aspect as law, of *dogma*, to "Denzinger." Now, the *magisterium* has not given expression to everything that is relevent to our belief, and occasionally even has said nothing at all so far on particular, highly important, Christian realities (e.g., Christian liberty), or it has reacted against errors without at the same time bringing out the deeper aspects, spiritually speaking, of the Catholic understanding of the matters. With this in mind Fr. Gardeil stressed the necessity of 'reincorporating [the partial truths thus defined] in the living categories of the Gospel.'" (Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, p. 335.)

[38] *Ibid*., p. 320.

[39] Michael Novak, in his insightful study of Vatican II, has suggested that the most adequate way of describing the conservative and progressive wings of Roman Catholic theology is by the terms "non-historical" and "historical." *The Open Church* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964), pp. 52-70.

[40] The four articles that Blondel wrote on Tradition appear in English in *The Letter on Apologetics and History and Dogma*, trans. by Alexander Dru and Illtyd Trethowan (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1964).

[41] Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, p. 455.

[42] *Ibid*., p. 456.

[43] Congar, *The Meaning of Tradition*, p. 30.

[44] Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, p. 455.

[45] *Ibid*., p. 362.

[46] Congar, *The Meaning of Tradition*, p. 141.

[47] Congar, Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église, p. 533.

[48] Ibid., p. 530.

[49] Ibid., pp. 533-34.

[50] Ibid., p. 452.

[51] Congar, The Meaning of Tradition, p. 143.

[52] Congar does however point out the severe limitations of what he terms the "Denzinger approach" to this monument, referring to the famous collection of selected statements from the principal documents of the Councils and the popes. Such a collection is useful as a tool. But there are real dangers in it if it begins to be equated with Tradition. It reduces the living Tradition to a series of texts. And, as a collection, it contains a preponderence of texts of the "extraordinary" magisterium (ecumenical Councils and ex cathedra pronouncements by the popes). In the category of texts by the ordinary magisterium it contains only papal encyclicals. There are no sermons, catechisms, or pastoral letters written by bishops, or decisions of local or national councils. In addition, this collection fails to put any of the writings in its historical context. They are treated as a-historical expressions. And most crucially, this approach treats the texts of the magisterium from a basically juridical point of view. More attention is paid to the authority of the "author" and the level of authority of the particular type of document that is used than to the content of what is said. "A juridical approach to the documents concentrates on the act of the authority that produced the text and the degree of the resulting obligation; it leads to a neglect of the value of thought and treasure of contemplation concealed in the text itself." (Ibid., p. 123. Cf. La foi et la théologie, pp. 70-71.) This has two unfortunate results. It means that all theological statements which have the same juridical authority tend to be considered of equal significance. It is true, for example, that all the statements made by the various ecumenical Councils are equally certain. However, they are not of equal value if one examines them from the standpoint of content. This leads to the second negative result. In the "Denzinger approach" theology is not developed systematically. Peripheral doctrines are given the same worth as central ones. Congar suggests that true theology is like a tree whose smaller branches and twigs find their unity in the trunk through the means of the main branches. The "Denzinger theology" cuts up the tree and distributes the wood in piles of equal weight. (Congar, The Meaning of Tradition, p. 123.)

[53] Ibid., p. 428.

[54] An example of this emphasis is a statement that Congar makes about how one comes to know the meaning of the Eucharist. "The written teaching of the apostles about this mystery is contained in some thirty or forty verses. These are texts of an inexhaustible depth and richness but, in addition to the fact that the Eucharist was celebrated and administered without waiting for them to be written, it is obvious that the faith of the Church goes far beyond what the texts contain. This faith was formed, from the Eucharist itself, taken as apresent reality, celebrated in the Church according to Tradition. In order to share the faith of the apostles on this point, and to believe exactly what they believed, it is not so much a matter of reading, studying and interpreting their written teaching, as of partaking, in our turn, of the bread and wine in which the apostles communicated (for the first time from the hands of our Lord) and were followed by the whole succession of generations after them." (Congar, The Meaning of Tradition, p. 24.)

[55] Congar, Tradition and Traditions, p. 429.

[56] There is an important ecumenical implication in both the "upbringing" and synthetic aspects of the liturgy as a monument of Tradition. Congar states that in his consistent effort to understand another Christian communion he has discovered that it is not sufficient to study its confessions and its theological treatises. In order to penetrate another Christian communion one must have a concrete knowledge of its life and liturgy. One cannot fully understand another Christian until one has seen him at prayer in his own church--and even more than this--until one has gone and prayed with him in his customary manner. (Ibid., pp. 433-34.)

[57] Congar, The Meaning of Tradition, pp. 131-32.

[58] Ibid., p. 430. It is interesting to note the similarities with Congar's explication of the liturgy as a monument of Tradition in the following passage which was written by the Eastern Orthodox theologian, Alexander Schmemann. "Liturgical tradition has a special significance as both a source of faith and a way to understand the function of Tradition in the Church. The liturgy, and more specifically the Sacraments, is the very means of the Church's fulfillemnt as the Body of Christ, as continuing Pentecost. It is therefore in and through the liturgy that the past really becomes present, is actualized and communicated as a "now." It is the liturgy and the Sacraments that reveal and confirm the truth and efficiency of those events (Incarnation, Resurrection, Glorification) which otherwise would remain doctrinal "propositions." It is thus in the liturgy, that Tradition 'comes alive' and is received as a living reality, as event and not only as doctrine. One can therefore understand the liturgy as the organ of the Church's knowledge of Tradition.

"But the liturgy is not only the knowledge of Tradition: it is also an essential element of Tradition itself. There are doctrines and teachings which belong to Tradition and which are formulated and manifested almost exclusively by means of the liturgy. The two obvious examples here would be Mariology and ecclesiology. The entire "knowledge" of Mary, the *Theotokos*, comes, so to speak, from liturgical communion with her. Orthodox Mariology is even somewhat reluctant to systematize the Mariological "data" supplied by the liturgy, as it is the only proper way to understand her precisely in liturgical contemplation and communion. Likewise, the proper elaboration and "explication" of ecclesiology is, from the Orthodox point of view, impossible without looking at it through the liturgy, and more especially through the Eucharist, which is the Sacrament of the Church, the act in which the Church fulfills and manifests itself as the Body of Christ, "mysterion" of the Kingdom of God. For example, the very fact that the Sacrament of Order is inseparable from the Eucharist tells us more about it than volumes of investigations in the "nature of mystery." And, finally, the liturgical texts themselves which constitute the prayer of the Church have always been understood as self-evident manifestations of Tradition." ("The Orthodox Tradition," in *The Convergence of Traditions*, ed. by Elmer O'Brien, S.J. [New York: Herder and Herder, 1967], pp. 24-25.)

[59] Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, p. 267.

[60] Congar, *La foi et la théologie*, pp. 103-104. In this same context, Congar comments that one of the major sources for Protestantism's general rejection of the development of Tradition is its denial that faith is in any significant sense a human response. "It is normal that Protestant theology, which misjudges the full reality of our 'act,' also misjudges development; it tends to conceive the faith of the Church as the simple *repetition* of the Word (written), and its history as a series of returns to this Word after temptations of syncretism. But the immanence of God in his creature goes beyond this linear scheme. Truth is 'given' *and* 'act,' even though every "act" is given to us. ('God has created creators': Bergson)." (*Ibid*., p. 104.)

[61] Congar, *Priest and Layman*, p. 281.

[62] "Man is not only situated in time and affected by temporality. *He has a history*. Each human being, and humanity as a whole, has a history and neither the angels above us, nor the animals below us in the scale of creation share this feature with us. For to have a history it is necessary to be in time and, at the same time, to go beyond, to rise above it. Because man transcends time, what he does in time is not only able to survive it (this is assured in animal generation already, in the work of the species), but is recapitulated and permits a certain progress. Better still: all communicable

acquisitions can be integrated into the fulfillment of a meaningful destiny. There is a distinctively human story, men have as such a destiny; this is not true of dogs and apes. History requires a dynamic and autofinalized unity of what is accomplished in time successively, not a mere succession-repetition of it." (Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, pp. 256-57.)

It is important to observe that Congar carefully avoids historicism. Although he stresses that man *has* a history, he does not go the further step of claiming that man *is* his history.

[63] Congar, *La foi et la théologie*, pp. 105-107.

[64] *Ibid.*, pp. 99-100. Cf. 113-14.

[65] *Ibid.*, pp. 107-12.

[66] The full statement reads: "...The purity itself of the Gospel is preserved in the Church, which promised before through the Prophets in the Holy Scriptures our Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God first promulgated with His own mouth, and then commanded 'to be preached' by His apostles 'to every creature' as the source of every saving truth and of instruction on morals (Matt. 28:19ff., Mark 16:15), and (the Synod) clearly perceiving that this truth and instruction are contained in the written books and in the unwritten traditions, which have been received by the apostles from the mouth of Christ Himself, or from the apostles themselves, at the dictation of the Holy Spirit, have come down even to us, transmitted as it were from hand to hand, (the Synod) following the examples of the orthodox Fathers, receives and holds in veneration with an equal affection of piety and reverence all the books both of the Old and of the New Testament, since one God is the author of both, and also the traditions themselves, those that appertain both to faith and to morals, as having been dictated either by Christ's own word of mouth, or by the Holy Spirit, and preserved in the Catholic Church by a continuous succession." (Denzinger, *The Sources of Catholic Dogma*, p. 244.)

[67] Hubert Jedin, *A History of the Council of Trent*, trans. by Dom Ernest Graf, O.S.B. (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1961), Vol. II, p. 75.

[68] Josef Rupert Geiselmann, "Scripture, Tradition, and the Church: An Ecumenical Problem," in *Christianity Divided*, ed. by Daniel J. Callahan, Heiko A. Oberman, Daniel J. O'Hanlon, S.J. (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1961), pp. 43.

[69] J. R. Geiselmann has argued that Trent chose to leave open the issue of the relationship between Scripture and Tradition by deleting the "partly ... partly." He believes that it was through the strong influence of men like Melchoir Cano that Roman Catholic theology began to falsely interpret Trent's

statement as supporting the "partly ... partly" theory. (*Ibid*., pp. 39-48.) George H. Tavard in *Holy Writ or Holy Church* (London: Burns & Oates, 1959), pp. 195-209, has arrived at essentially the same conclusion. It is his opinion that the change was one of substance, in that those who held that "all is in Scripture" were able, after the "partly ... partly" was removed, to accept the decision of the Council.

On the other hand, H. Lennerz has argued that the change did not represent a material revision but simply a stylistic improvement. (H. Lennerz, "Scripture sola?" *Gregorium*, XL (1959), pp. 38-53.) The Protestant scholar, Heiko Oberman has also been critical of Geiselmann's position. Among his reasons are that Cardinal Cervini, who was involved in the rewriting, claimed that the two versions were "in substance" the same, and that the *Catechismus Romanus* (1566) presents the "partly ... partly" view. (Oberman, "The Protestant Tradition," pp. 101-104.)

On the historical question of how the Council fathers interpreted their statement about Scripture and Tradition, Congar thinks that Geiselmann is wrong. Congar believes they understood the key phrase to mean "partly ... partly." But he thinks Geiselmann is right in pointing out that the text itself allows for a different--and a more adequate--interpretation. "The fact that those theologians who drew up the decree did not replace *partim* ... *partim* by *et* ... *et* with the explicit intention of favouring the thesis of the material sufficiency of Scripture, does not rule out the fact that *theologically* speaking, since the alteration was made, room was in fact made at the same time for this thesis." (Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, p. 411.)

Vatican II reflected this debate. The first schema on revelation was developed by the preparatory theological commission under the leadership of Cardinal Ottaviani. Its title, *De Fontibus Revelationis*, indicated the position of the document. It spoke of "sources" in the plural. And the first chapter was explicitly titled "The Two Sources of Revelation" (*De duplici Fonte Revelationis*). (Kristen Ejner Skydsgaard, "Scripture and Tradition," in *Challenge and Response*, ed. by Warren A. Quanbeck [Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1966], pp. 25-26.) A decisive majority of the Council fathers rejected the proposed document in perhaps the key vote of the entire Council. However, they did not have the required two-thirds majority to require a newly written document. It looked as if the schema would have to be debated and revised chapter by chapter, if not sentence by sentence. The Progressives were discouraged, because it was generally agreed that this was a highly unsatisfactory way of proceeding. Fortunately Pope John XXIII intervened to terminate the debate and directed a newly formed commission to prepare a new draft. Cardinal Ottaviani and Cardinal Bea were named co-chairman. In the schema that was approved by the Council, revelation is spoken of as a spring from which flows two streams. "Hence there exists a close connection and communication between

Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture. For both of them, flowing from the same divine wellspring, in a certain way merge into a unity and tend toward the same end." ("Constitution on Divine Revelation," in *The Teachings of the Second Vatican Council* [Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1966], p. 353.) The two-source theory is decisively rejected by making clear that the basic revelation is Jesus Christ himself, and that this revelation is then communicated ("traditioned") by both Scripture and Tradition.

[70] Congar, *The Meaning of Tradition*, pp. 94-95.

[71] Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, pp. 410-11.

[72] Congar, *The Meaning of Tradition*, p. 88. Congar suggests that the creation of various confessions of faith by the Protestant communions constitutes further evidence of the inadequacy of Scripture alone as a hermeneutical principle. And to the claim that these confessions are only an explication of Scripture and always remain subject to it, Congar responds: "Protestants say that a confession of faith is only a clarification of a belief which is completely subject to Scripture, and to Scripture alone; but neither the Fathers nor we ourselves would say anything different in respect of the conciliar canons. Protestants add that the normative value of such confessions is completely conditioned, conditional and revisable. But in fact these confessions have no more been revised than the conciliar dogmas, and their normative value is just as absolute. The difference between these confessions of faith, as seen by Protestant theology, and the traditional thesis on Scripture-Tradition-Church is principally the absence in Protestant thought of a genuine ecclesiology." (Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, p. 422.)

Protestant theologians have been recognizing with increasing frequency the importance of Tradition and traditions. For example, Jaroslav Pelikan has written: "The History of the Church has made the formal anti-traditionalism of the Reformers obsolete. To defy the accumulated traditions of the medieval Church in the name of the freedom of God and of the renewing Spirit, the Reformers could speak as though traditions were always consequent upon Scripture, both logically and chronologically, and as though it were possible to preclude the development of traditions by firm adherence to the Scriptures as both the source and the norm of Christian teaching. Such defiance makes less and less sense as the several Protestant communions themselves spawn traditions of teaching and of usage that are no more (and no less!) Scriptural in their origin and validation than were the *consuetudines ecclesiasticae* against whose claim to apostolicity the Reformers protested so vehemently." (Jaroslav Pelikan, "Overcoming History by History," in *The Old and the New in the Church* [Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961], pp. 36-37.) And Albert Outler has made the following remark about the Faith and Order Study Commission on Tradition and Traditions: "We were trying to find a way to maintain the primacy of Scripture, to be clear about the fallibility and entropic nature of all ecclesiastical traditions, and yet also to affirm the reality of a singular, transcendental Tradition identifiable and active in the various epochs and segments of Christian history." (Albert C. Outler, "Scripture, Tradition and Ecumenism," in *Scripture and Ecumenism*, ed. by Leonard J. Swidler [Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1965], pp. 18-19.) In the Faith and Order study to which Outler refers, it is argued that Tradition (Christ present in the life of the Church) can be embodied in traditions (that which distinguished one denomination from another), and that, the latter are inevitable, as Pelikan suggests. *Sola scriptura* as a hermeneutical principle is in fact nowhere found alone. But this study also indicates that the Tradition can be distorted and betrayed by traditions. There is no indefectibility. And here we find a major difference from Congar's position. ("Tradition and Traditions," in *Faith and Order Findings* [London: SCM Press LTD, 1963], p. 22.)

[73] Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, p. 407.

[74] Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, I/2, pp. 560-64.

[75] *Ibid*., p. 649. For an informative article on Barth's view of Tradition see: Robert McAfee Brown, "Scripture and Tradition in the Theology of Karl Barth," in *Scripture and Ecumenism*, ed. by Leonard J. Swidler (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1965), pp. 23-42.

[76] "There can never be a final word, but only a word which is imperative and binding and authoritative until it is succeeded by something else. The Church confesses, and it also appropriates earlier and other confessions. But even as it does so, it remains open to the possibility that it may be better instructed by the Word of God, that it may know it better and therefore confess it better." (Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, I/2, p. 657.)

[77] Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, p. 403.

[78] *Ibid*., pp. 203-206.

[79] *Ibid*., p. 407.

[80] Congar suggests that this process has at least some similarities with the way in which Lavverrier was able, merely by means of calculation and without factual evidence, to state the existence of the planet Saturn before its existence was confirmed by telescope. (Congar, *The Meaning of Tradition*, pp. 112-13.)

[81] To be honest with itself, Protestant theology must admit it also utilizes the implicit-explicit scheme at times. For instance, Protestantism has generally held that the doctrine of the Trinity is not explicitly formulated in the New Testament but that it is implicitly contained therein. If one admits the possibility of such developments the main issue is what distinguishes a dogmatizable development from one that falls in the category of theological opinion. George Lindbeck ("The Problem of Doctrinal Development and Contemporary Protestant Theology," in Man as Man and Believer, ed. by Edward Schillebeeckx, O.P. and Boniface Willems, O.P., Concilium, Vol. XXI /New York: Paulist Press, 1967/, pp. 142-44) suggests that the criterion for distinguishing between these two types of development--assuming that they are both in harmony with the witness of Scripture--is that a dogmatizable development is one which was a necessary defense against a vital threat to the integrity of the Gospel. By Lindbeck's standard, the Immaculate Conception would be rejected as a Dogma, although it would be considered to be theologically permissable.

[82] A good example of how Congar believes the principle of analogy of faith should be employed is his own interpretation of the Assumption of Mary. He points out the inadequacy of those theological views which treat this doctrine outside of the context of sacred history. (Congar, Les voies du Dieu vivant, pp. 222-23.) Such an a-historical approach tends to deduce the attributes of Mary in a manner similar to that in which, in a treatise on God, one deduces his attributes from the principle of his absolute perfection. In contrast, Congar places Mary within the context of salvation history. Mary is not simply the first of the saints. She has a unique position in the history of redemption because she is connected to the very source of grace through the annunciation and birth of Christ. Within sacred history, Mary is on the side of Christ, although in a very humble and purely human way. Mary is an anticipation--a sign--of the destiny of every Christian. She is an anticipation and representation of that part of the design of sacred history which is yet to be fulfilled. She is already with Christ, but entirely by his grace. Mary has been given in full what the entire Church will be given. And just as Mary co-operated in a human way with the grace of God, so does the Church co-operate in this time between the establishment and the completion of the work of Christ. (Ibid., pp. 224-25.)

[83] Congar, Tradition and Traditions, pp. 422-24.

[84] Dietrich Ritschl, Memory and Hope (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967), pp. 72-73.

[85] Daniel Jenkins, Tradition, Freedom, and the Spirit (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1951), pp. 71-85.

CHAPTER IV

THE STRUCTURE AND LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Having indicated the manner in which ecclesiology must be rooted in the context of sacred history as conserved and interpreted through the norms of Scripture and Tradition, it is now possible to focus directly upon the doctrine of the Church. The most fundamental distinction that Congar makes in his ecclesiology is between the structure and life of the Church.

> By *structure* we understand the principles which, because they come from Christ, representing with him and in his name the generative causes of the Church, as the things in her, as her *pars formalis*, that constitute men as Christ's Church.[1]

These formative causes are the deposit of faith, the sacraments, and the apostolic and hierarchical ministry of the Church. Together they shape the essence, the *esse*, of the Church. God always remains their author and source.[2] The life of the Church is defined in this manner:

> By life we understand the activity which men, made Church by the said principles, exercise in order that the Church may fulfil her mission and attain her end, which is throughout time and space, to make of men and a reconciled world the community-temple of God.[3]

For Congar, any adequate understanding of the reality of the Church must give adequate attention to both of these categories, which must be distinguished but not separated.[4]

As indicated, the structure of the Church is prior to its life because Jesus instituted the former for the benefit of the latter. Christ uses the visible means of the structure to express, realize, and bring to full fruition the New Covenant which he has established. This structure, which has been given by God, is not an end itself. It is the means that has been chosen by which the world might be incorporated into the Body of Christ.

It is for this reason that the denial of the structure-pole is, for Congar, a denial of the very reality of the Church itself. And in his view, this is precisely what Protestant ecclesiology always tends to do. As we observed in Chapter Two, Protestantism is prone to view the Church as a reality of pure grace. It consequently fails to give sufficient stress to the visible and human "elements" which have been chosen by Christ to be a means of grace. During "the time of the Church," the life-pole always remains dependent upon the structure-pole. Only with the full coming of the Kingdom, when God will be in all, will there no longer be a need of the structural means. To deny the structure of the Church is to deny the very way in which Christ has chosen to accomplish his reconciling work.

But there is also a grave danger in not giving sufficient emphasis to the life-pole in the doctrine of the Church. It is not as critical an omission as that of leaving out the structure-pole since it does not involve the _esse_ but the _bene esse_ of the Church. It is nonetheless very important, because it involves the mission of the Church. And in Congar's estimation, Roman Catholic ecclesiology has frequently been guilty of precisely this failure. Since the validity of its structure has so frequently been called into question or attacked, Roman Catholic theology has focused predominantly upon this pole and neglected the life-pole.[5]

> It is understandable that, when some element of the structure was threatened, the Church should seek above all to maintain her integrity and that doctrine would then take little account of life.... In general, our treatises de Ecclesia, born of the need to combat error are concerned only with structure; they do not deal with the operation of life, and above all--what seems to us of decisive importance--they do not show how structure requires life and is fulfilled in it, how life has to be integrated into the structure.[6]

When ecclesiology ignores the life-pole, it risks isolation from the real questions and needs of man. It risks the continuation of forms which no longer convey and actually obscure the true meaning of the Church. And it risks developing an introverted view of the Church, which as a result ignores the Church's mission to the world. Much of Congar's own ecclesiology is aimed at restoring the life-pole, without in any sense denying the structure-pole.

One illustration of this is the way in which he treats the history of the papal formula "vicarius Christi." Originally, its meaning was sacramental in character.

> Its older sense in Catholic theology was that of a visible representation of a transcendent or heavenly power which was actually active in its earthly representative. The context and atmosphere surrounding this idea were those of the actuality of the action of God, Christ and the saints working in their representative.[7]

The concept of vicarius Christi" initially implied the continuing activity of God--of a "verticle descent." Congar argues that in the passage of time (beginning with the Gregorian reform) this meaning became obscured by a more juridically oriented interpretation.

> Although this quality does not disappear, it is overlaid by another quality which also is not entirely new--what is new is its marked predominance over the former one--namely, the idea of a 'power' given at the beginning by someone, by Christ, to his 'vicar', that is, to a representative who takes his place and who hands on to those who come after him, in an historical sequence or transmission and succession, the power thus received. The predominant feature is not a vertical movement, an actual presence, an iconological representation, but the 'horizontal' transmission of a power vested in the earthly jurisdiction and which, although received from on high, is yet genuinely possessed by this jurisdiction which uses it in the same way as any authority may use the power attached to it.[8]

The structure, the papacy as the head of the hierarchical priesthood, tended to become an end in itself, rather than being seen primarily as a means or instrument of the work of Christ in the "building" of the people of God or the life of the Church.

A second illustration of how Congar seeks to restore the life-pole is his treatment of the Church as an institution. Following the ancient canonical definition, which he believes encompasses the descriptive notion of the sociologists, Congar characterizes an institution as follows:

> The institution ... is characterized by the intervention of an authority: both at its origin, at the level of the act which creates

> it and also throughout its existence which must be conformed to the will which brought it into being. In the corporation the common goal and will come from the members. In the institution, they transcend the members and are given them from on high.[9]

The Church is an institution because Christ is both its origin and continuing source. However, at the concrete level the various aspects of the Church's structure, which are necessary for its very being, tend to suffer the same destiny as all instituted structures, that is, their historically shaped forms survive even though their original and basic purpose has been largely forgotten. The various "acts" or "means" become dissociated from their intent. "History and facts show that the mediations not only take the necessary determined historical forms, but tend to develop in an autonomous fashion and to occupy the whole stage."[10]

Institutional elements seem to nourish themselves on what is least personal. Legalism easily abounds. For instance, it is theologically valid for the Mass to be said without the effective participation of any of the faithful. But it must also be affirmed (as Vatican II did in its Constitution on the Liturgy) that the true subject of the liturgical action is the assembly of the faithful, who offer the sacrifice of Christ through the ministry of the priesthood. The desire to restore meaning to liturgical celebrations and to promote the active participation of the faithful both have the purpose of restoring this primary aspect of the liturgy. "The whole meaning of the liturgical renovation of the twentieth century is to bring it about that liturgical celebration be not pure ceremony in itself but rather the worship of someone."[11] Structure remains valid in an objective sense even when the life-pole is ignored. But it leads to a significant spiritual impoverishment. To repeat once again, the structure of the Church has been given inorder that it might nourish the life of the Church.

These are only examples of the way in which Congar constantly seeks to restore what he considers to be the vital and organic relationship between the structure-pole and the life-pole. As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, this distinction is one that shapes every major aspect of his ecclesiology. Its importance will become increasingly apparent as we now turn our attention to two of the major aspects of a doctrine of the Church, namely, the marks of the Church and the status and role of the laity. By examining Congar's interpretation of these topics we will be able to accomplish dual purposes. We will be able to examine in more detail his utilization of the categories of structure and life, and present his central views on these other important ecclesiological subjects.

In Congar's mind, any attempt to define the traditional marks of the Church as stated in the Nicene Creed must take into account the fact that the Church lives in and reflects the tension of existing between Christ as Alpha and Christ as Omega. The Church is given and yet it is still to be accomplished. Or to use the categories we are examining, although the Church has a permanent structure, its life continues to be dynamic and developmental in character.

> She is always the Church of the apostles ... the breaking of the bread ... the Church of Peter ... the Great Councils. Therefore, we must see her as a Church which is given, and this given we can no longer alter. But we must also see her as the Church called, as the Church which must come to self-knowledge and endeavor to be realized in terms of God's will for her, in terms of what God demands, of what God wishes to do in the event and throughout time.[12]

As one would expect, Congar's explication of each of the four marks takes into account both of the aspects. The unity of the Church has its basis in the revelation of God, and particularly in Jesus Christ.

> It is of the Church's essence to be spiritually One. Uncompromisingly one, because God is One and the Church is an extension and communication to humanity of His life.
>
> Because Christ is one, His grace is one, His Mystical Body is one, and there is no salvation except by incorporation in one Lord.
>
> Because the faith which incorporates in us the divine life is one and the baptism is one which incorporates us in Christ. "One Lord, one Faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4:5).[13]

The fundamental oneness of the Church is a gift of God. This gift creates a historical fellowship or communion. Yet even amid the changing events and currents of history, the Church's structure endures.

> ...This outward constitution of the Church, the organ of her unity and catholicity, is something established by the Lord Himself or by His apostles and it is not susceptible of change.[14]

The means of the Church's visible unity--the deposit of faith, the sacraments, and the apostolic and hierarchical priesthood--have been divinely established and are consequently unalterable.

However, this does not mean that the oneness of the Church is to be considered only in static terms. Congar suggests that Vatican I made precisely this one-sided emphasis. It presented the Church as a "house" which is already constructed and in which the faithful must remain if they are already there, and to which they must go if they are presently outside.[15] The reason that this is an incomplete formulation is that it views the mark of unity as only referring to Christ as Alpha and not pointing forward to Christ as Omega. It sees the oneness of the Church solely in terms of structure. It fails to see it in terms of dynamic life. For Congar, the unity of the Church involves its missionary thrust. The one Church has been commissioned to move into the tribulations and suffering of the world, and to bind-up and heal its wounds.[16]

Like unity, apostolicity has a very strong quality of givenness. It expresses the identity of the work of the ministry of the Church with the ministry of the Twelve, which in turn proceeded from the ministry of Christ.

> At its depth, the apostolicity of the Church is formed by the identity of the mission between the present Church and the apostles, then, positis ponendis, between the apostles and Christ, the first and true "envoy" of God. The triple power of government, of priesthood, and of the magisterium, that is commonly distinguished in the Church, is really the same authority, priesthood, and magisterium as that of the apostles, and proceeds, finally from Christ....[17]

The emphasis is upon a type of unbroken chain, apostolic succession, that binds the Church together down through the ages.

This is the "given" part of the mark of apostolicity. There is also a dynamic side. Traditionally, "apostolic" has simply meant "like the apostles." Congar points out that in contemporary biblical and theological thought this has increasingly been interpreted to mean missionary zeal and concern. Christ was sent to the world. Likewise, the apostles were sent to the world--from Jerusalem, to all of Judea and Samaria, and even unto the ends of the earth. The Church of today continues this mission. "Sent to the world, the Church of the Apostles is essentially 'missionary.'"[18]

Catholicity is the mark of the Church which points to the fact that the vast and rich multiplicity of history is brought into harmony with the universality of the Church. It also is rooted in the revelation of Jesus Christ. Christ is the source of renewal for the entire world. All of creation is restored in him. At the same time, the completion of reconciliation takes place only in the course of sacred history.[19] This means that even more than the marks of unity and apostolicity, catholicity must be seen as having a strong dynamic thrust (life-pole). It particularly expresses the truth that the Church is essentially missionary.[20]

Catholicity also indicates that the mission of the Church is not one of simple uniformity but one which incorporates and reconciles all that is valid in human achievements and in the varied cultures of the world into the Body of Christ.[21] Since the "new man" is described by Paul as neither Greek nor Barbarian, the Church cannot be simply "Roman" nor

"Western." The basis for this is that the truth of revelation is catholic or universal. With the proper critical effort and always keeping in mind the danger of simply equating the Gospel and culture, it is consequently possible and necessary to re-express and translate the Gospel into a variety of linguistic traditions and cultural settings.[22] The catholicity of the Church, grounded in the catholicity of Christ, assimilates the catholicity of human nature.[23]

Each of the first three marks is characterized by the fourth, holiness. It is involved in both their structure and life-poles. The unity of the Church is not the same type of unity that exists in a great nation. It is not a unity based upon power. It is a unity that has its basis in Christ, in his sanctifying grace, and in the continuing presence of the Holy Spirit. Likewise, it is not sufficient to consider apostolicity just as an impressive and valid hierarchical "chain" that holds the Church together through its history. At a deeper level it is the communication of the holiness of Christ. This is indicated by the special gifts that have been given to the apostolic and hierarchical priesthood. And lastly, catholicity is not just world-wide expansion. It has no essential similarities with any type of national or business "imperialism." It is the expansion of Christ's holiness. It is the continued defeat of meaninglessness and alienation, through the "growth" of the Body of Christ.[24]

In turning to Congar's understanding of the laity, we will be focusing upon both a major aspect of his ecclesiology and upon one of his most important contributions to contemporary Roman Catholic theology. On account of its doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, Protestantism has always tended to give some emphasis to the role of the laity. Roman Catholic theology on the other hand has traditionally stayed away from the subject. It connoted "Protestantism." But since the Second World War there has been an increased Protestant concentration upon this area of the doctrine of the Church, particularly in the context of Church renewal.[25] There also has developed a significant interest in the theology of the laity in Catholicism. Congar was the first to begin exploring this area, although he was soon followed by others. His initial articles on the laity appeared in the years 1946-1949.[26] In our explication, we will rely primarily upon his major work on the subject, Lay People in the Church.

In defining the term "laity," Congar explicates the point that has so frequently been made in the various books on the laity during the last two decades, namely, that in Scripture the word laos designates the people of God in contrast to the goim, the gentiles. "Our word 'lay,' then, is connected with a word that for Jews, and then for Christians, properly meant the sacred people in opposition to the peoples who were not consecrated...."[27] He acknowledges that in New Testament vocabulary there is no distinction made between "lay people" and "clerics." However, he believes that those Protestant historians and theologians, such as Harnack, are wrong who have argued that this means that the apostolic Church was an undifferentiated community living under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and that the distinction that later developed between clerics and laity was a betrayal and unfortunate "catholicizing" of the nature and mission of the Church. Congar feels that it is a mistake to assume that because such a distinction was not made in the vocabulary of the time that one necessarily did not in fact exist. Moreover, Clement of Rome already makes this linguistic distinction in a letter, which probably dates from late in the first century, to the community at Corinth. And by the beginning and middle of the third century, it appears quite frequently in such prominant theologians as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Tertullian, and Cyprian.[28]

Turning to the understanding of the meaning of the laity in the history of the Church, Congar states that one is confronted not just with two but with three categories. In addition to "clerics" and "lay people" there was the "monastic condition." The clerical state is essentially one of function. "It is brought about by entry into the ministry, the 'diaconia', the service of sacred things; and the entry is made by being 'ordained' to this service, that is, in all strictness, by ordinations properly so called."[29] It is marked by service at the altar and of service to the congregation. In contrast, the monastic state is not a function but a way of life. A man chooses it "... in order that he shall not live for the world and in the world's way but rather so much as possible for God and in God's way, this consists in living apart from the world, leading so far as may be a heavenly or angelic life, the life of the Kingdom that is not of this world."[30] Generally speaking, during the course of history, the lay condition has been defined in "opposition" to one or the other of these states. This is the case even though the understanding of the cleric and monastic conditions soon became merged in the West. It was "fitting" that if the monastic life was considered to be a life of holiness that clerics would adopt this same type of life. For example, one sees men like St. Augustine advocating that communities of clerics live monastically. And in the West monks have had a thoroughly liturgical rule of life--while Eastern monks have usually been cenobites.[31]

When the monastic understanding has been the point of reference, the laity has been seen as living among earthly or worldly things while the clerics and monks have been viewed as being concerned primarily with that which is deemed sacred. This type of understanding, which had reached a developed state by the twelfth century, has two important implications. It means that the lay state is a concession to human weakness. There is a way of life for the strong, and another way for the weak. A Christian who is striving to be obedient to the Gospel will leave the world of compromises. Secondly, the laity has no part in the sphere of sacred things--only in temporal affairs. Since they are oriented to the world they have no basic function to fulfill within the Church.[32]

When the clerical function has been the point of reference, the laity has been seen as receiving the necessary means of salvation from the clergy. This is the canonical position. "The principle canons of the Code that speak of the lay people in a general way show them as having to receive, as having the right to receive, spiritual goods from the clergy, especially the helps necessary for salvation."[33]

In Congar's mind, both of these perspectives leave a great deal to be desired with regards to an adequate theology of the laity. The first suggests that the lay state exists only as a concession to people's weakness. The second suggests that the lay condition is primarily a negative and passive one. Against these truncated concepts of the laity, Congar strives to develop a more adequate view. We shall delineate the basic thrust of his position by indicating first of all his understanding of how the laity participates in the threefold work of Christ, and secondly by explicating his interpretation on the way in which the laity are called to relate to the world.

Congar uses the three traditional categories of the work of Christ, priestly, kingly, and prophetic, to develop his interpretation of the Church, and more specifically, the role of the laity. Just as the work which Christ did on behalf of God for man and his salvation can be defined within this framework, so can the continuation of this work in and by the Church.[34] As one would anticipate, the Church's priestly work is rooted in the fundamental meaning of sacred history. itself, that is, in the establishment of reconciliation and communion. The priesthood includes every sacrificial act which is done to unite humanity in fellowship with God. Of course, the basic sacrifice is that of Jesus Christ. His atonement (at-one-ment) is unique and at the same time absolute and universal. Every sacrifice on the part of the individual Christian is of significance only in and through him. "Christ's sacrifice is ours; one is dead for all, then all are dead, exactly in order that all shall share the deep reality of sacrifice, which is the making of one's centre in someone else, to live for another...."[35]

The act of "living for another" is present in both what Congar terms the inward and outward aspects of Christ's sacrifice. His decision to face death was not something forced upon him. Nor was it a "chance" happening. It was his own free choice. "...The Saviour gave ample evidence that he was giving his life freely for a determined end, as a ransom and as a covenant, that he was making his passion and death a sacrifice."[36] The inner dimension Congar equates with Christ's obedient sonship. And his absolute love for God necessarily implies the outward aspect, namely, his unfailing love of man.

The question arises as to how we participate in Christ's sacrifice. We are already quite familiar with the answer. It is accomplished through the "acts" of the Holy Spirit and the apostolic ministry. Corresponding to these two agents, there is a twofold priesthood.

> There is a priesthood of the life of grace, of life lived in Christ, lived by the Holy Spirit: there is the priesthood of the righteous as such, the priesthood of communion with God. It offers up sacrifices that are called spiritual.... There is also a sacramental priesthood which is a

> sharing in the priestly office of Christ; it is acquired through the sacraments that confer a character, baptism, confirmation, order.[37]

The Church and its priestly work is already, to a limited extent, a communion (life). Accordingly, there is an interior sacrifice. And it applies to every man within the Church, whether lay, religious, or cleric. But this period between the two advents of Christ is the time of "visible means," which Christ has given to the Church as its foundation (structure). "In this worship, some are qualified to celebrate and to give, others to take part by assistance and to receive; the first are thus qualified by the character of the holy order, the second by the character of baptism and confirmation."[38] When the Kingdom comes in full, there will only be the spiritual priesthood. During the "time of the Church," the exterior priesthood is both an expression of the interior and it is the means of procuring the interior.[39]

Our discussion has proceeded sufficiently to indicate that both of the traditional ways of interpreting the laity have received some significant alterations. In our summary, we have seen that Congar affirms that every believer is a spiritual priest through Christ. Each Christian is called to sacrifice himself--to put himself in service to God and to his neighbor.

> When it is a question of our right relation with God--our creator, from whom comes all that we are and have--then it is oneself, the totality of one's being, doing and having, that must be the 'sacrifice'. This is evidently the work of a lifetime, one which literally can be fully carried out only if it includes our death in the offering of our life; but this work is made concrete in

> particular actions and things, in the offering of which we are able to express, and so to make actual, our relationship to God as to our absolute source.[40]

All Christians are called to be completely free of the world in order to be completely free for God in the world.

With regard to the external priesthood, it is clear that any type of active (clergy) and passive (laity) formulation is not adequate. This is evident with regard to the eucharist, a case in which one might expect this framework to be most clearly expressed. The clergy definitely has a particular charge of "office." And it has been given the power and charism to fulfill this charge, although it should always be remembered that Christ alone is the true celebrant. The validity of the acts of the apostolic priesthood lies simply in the fact that it has been given authority by Christ to celebrate in his name and that his Spirit is constantly at work con-celebrating. This is what Congar calls worship from above. But there is also worship from below, which is a result of man's answer to God's initiative. There is a dialectic of giving and responding.[41]

The response is expressed in two different ways in the eucharist. First, the Mass is not only Christ's sacrifice as offered by Christ himself but also Christ's sacrifice as offered by the Church.[42] Any time there is a sacramental celebration of Christ's sacrifice there is also an act of the Church. And although this offering is centered in the clergyman, the laity act with him.

> First, they offer in and through the priest. He alone celebrates at the altar, but he acts

> in the person of Christ considered as Head and as offering in the name of all his members; this is why it is true to say that the whole Church makes the offering of the victim through Christ ('*Mediator*'). Secondly, only ordained priests have the power to make the Memorial of the Lord; but they have it precisely so that the memorial may be celebrated in the Church, for carrying on therein of the work of the Redemption by showing forth the reference of Christ's sacrifice to ours and by actively associating ours with his, the one supreme sacrifice. This double reference means that the consecration (that is, the sacramental 'beginning anew' of Christ's immolation), though brought about by the priest alone, truly concerns the whole Church and involves something on the part of the people themselves.[43]

It should be observed that it is the *whole* Church that makes the offering. Evidence of this fact is that the eucharistic consecration is brought about "by the grace of God or the Holy Spirit in response to the prayer of the Christian people."[44] This is the case even though the power of consecration belongs only to the clergy. The covenant between God and his people is not abolished or diminished at the Lord's Supper; it is most profoundly manifest at this occasion.

As already implied, the second reason that it is inaccurate to state that the laity is passive at the celebration of the eucharist is that the Church offers its own sacrifice through the sacrifice of Christ. This occurs, for instance, in the offering of the *oblata*. In this act there is an important element of thanksgiving to God for the world which he has given to man to use and enjoy. In addition, there is within this offering a sense of "bringing" the world into the sphere of redemption.[45] And at the same time the lay worshippers offer themselves. The Mass has its full effect only in the hearts of the faithful as they offer their lives to God in Christ. There is an inter-action between the external priesthood in which the believer participates, what Congar terms his baptismal priesthood, and his inward or spiritual priesthood.

> There is a sort of osmosis, presence of each in the other, since as members of the liturgical gathering we offer ourselves with Christ, achieving the act of our inward spiritual priesthood in that of our baptismal priesthood; and then we give the Mass all its reality in our life, thus achieving the act of our baptismal priesthood in that of our inward spiritual priesthood, which is co-extensive with our existence.[46]

To return to the distinction between the structure and the life of the Church, it is Congar's position that the laity's priesthood does not as such belong to the structure of the Church. The acts of this priesthood do not form the Church. "The priestly acts of the unordained faithful pertain to the sphere of the liturgical deeds that express the Church, but they do not constitute her."[47]

Turning to the second dimension of Christ's work, Congar suggests that the Church participates in his kingship in two ways, as a "form of life" in the order of the New Covenant, and as "power" for leading the people of God to perfect fellowship. One aspect of kingship as a form of life is kingship over self. Congar affirms St. Augustine's paradoxical statement that when man is master of himself he is in the state of slavery and when he is a slave to Christ he is free. "The faithful follower of

Christ shares in the kingship and holiness of his Head only by submission to and union with God's will, by adjusting himself to the divine purpose for us, for our brethren and for the world."[48] Any type of Stoic self-mastery must be rejected because it continues to center around the source of bondage, the self.

Another aspect of kingship as a form of life is kingship over the world. The Christian is a citizen of two cities. He lives in relation to the absolute values of the kingdom of God and yet he must also live his life within the relative conditions of history. The Christian must avoid becoming subservient to these relative conditions. He must refrain from treating them as absolutes. But he must make use of the world. There must be simultaneously an element of engagement and one of refusal.

Engagement is necessary because the Christian is called to take part in Christ's work of bringing all of creation under the rule of God. The doctrine of creation points to man's rightful dominion over the earth. He is told to govern and subdue it. And even though creation has been disturbed seriously by man's rebellion, there is still a natural order, in which all men, including the Christian, participate. "Man is a toilful and anxious king, who has to subdue his realm inch by inch, with unceasing labour."[49] In addition, the Christian also takes part in Christ's redemptive kingship, which is, as we saw in Chapter Two, always in the form of a servant during "the time of the Church." The kingship of the Church is always a spiritual kingship, that is, one of service.

Refusal is necessary in order to safeguard the integrity of engagement.[50] Because oftthe Christian's calling to be absolutely loyal to God, he must show a certain contempt for the world in so far as the latter is the realm of the sin. For this reason, the kingly form of life involves a kingly poverty. The Christian uses the gifts of creation--but "using them as using them not."

> The essential content of the gospel is a message of salvation addressed to men plunged in a sinful world. It does not tell them how to organize the world: it shows them how treacherous it is, and how it is the object of the wrath of God, but also of his pardon in Jesus Christ. To this pardon, won for us on the Cross, and this salvation, for whose total achievement we still are waiting, we are made fast by faith and hope, somewhat as a ship, tossed by storms, is fastened to _terra firma_ by an anchor, fifty fathoms down. There is the essence of being a Christian: to escape from a perverse world, to use it as though not using it.[51]

Although martyrdom is the supreme example of this, every act of Christian freedom is an expression of the sovereignty of the absolute over the relative.[52]

The second major way that the Church participates in Christ's kingly work is through its power or competence for leading God's people into perfect fellowship. While kingship as a way of life is a calling and responsibility of every Christian, like the spiritual priesthood, this second form is differentiated, governing like the external priesthood. The laity has no role in the governing of the Church in so far as this refers to the structure of the Church. "There is not, never has been, any power of ecclesiastical rule among the laity, nothing that determines or conditions the hierarchical and sacramental structure of the Church."[53] Yet, although the power of ecclesiastical rule belongs only to those who have been called to exercise this office, the laity are again not just passive. An historical example of its activity is that even though the laity were not invited to Vatican I, their participation was an important feature of the great councils from the Lateran in 1215 up to and including Trent.

> Our conclusions are these. (1) The Church's concrete regime is traditionally one of councils, not of solitary personal decisions. St. Ignatius of Antioch shows us the bishop surrounded by his presbytery. Laity do not form part of councils habitually and by right, but as St. Cyprian and others show, they can do so when they are able to supply useful information or when the matters to be discussed concern them: e.g., restoration of the Church's communion, mixed questions, marriage, abuses to be reformed. Chrysostom regarded lay people as a bishop's advisers. (2) Lay people at a council are not constituent members and are not judges of faith.[54]

Basing his position on this significant historical and theological precedent, Congar holds that there should be constant conversation between the hierarchical ministry and the laity. The latter are to give consent to the decisions of the Church's "government." However, this affirmation is not to be brought about by a type of totalitarian process. It is a matter of "fatherly authority." Serious discussion should be encouraged and embraced. In this sense, the hierarchy also consents. Legitimate questions and requests should be welcomed by the hierarchy.

> ...We have tried to show the necessity of a twofold consent in the Church: the radically necessary consent of life to incorporate itself in the structure, lacking which we run in vain and life is not the life of the Church; and the consent of the structure to welcome life's needs and developments, lacking which the bases remain firm but there is no movement at all, and the Church while faithful to her fundamental constitution, fails to fulfill her mission. Within what we have explained as the way alike of order and well-being, there are wide lay initiatives, a whole body of achievements through which the faithful truly make the Church and shape her historic embodiment and aspect throughout time and space. Everything goes to show that there is a role of the community in the regulation of its own life. But it is not properly power, authority, participation in ruling or in the kingly function of the Church as power.[55]

As in the case of the priestly work, the priority of the Church's structure must be maintained in the kingly function. To overturn it is to overturn the Church itself. For this reason any attempt to conceive of the government of the Church along democratic models is erroneous. Any such effort ignores that the structure of the Church is unalterably hierarchical (which is not to say that anti-democratic political models are any more applicable). This form of government is not a result of historical circumstance but of the revelation of God. Yet if Congar is clear in affirming that the Church should safeguard its hierarchical principle, he is equally explicit in indicating the need for the life-category to be given its due and proper weight in the kingly work of the Church.

The third dimension of the work of Christ in which the Church participates is his prophetic work. Congar, following

St. Thomas, distinguishes between three different categories of the Church's teachings: the teaching of divine revelation with authority; hortatory and apostolic teaching; scientific teaching. As we saw in the discussion of the Church as the historical agent of Tradition, the responsibility of teaching divine revelation with authority belongs in the final analysis solely to the magisterium. It alone has been given the charism of apostolicity. It has the responsibility and the capacity to be certain that the doctrine of faith that is taught in the contemporary Church is that of Christ and the apostles. Although this authority cannot be delegated, it can be participated in by the clergy and the religious. "...Their authority is never more than 'borrowed' from and controlled by that of the bishop: it is a reflection of echo, depending entirely on association and conformity with the bishop's public authority."[56] To a still lesser degree, the laity also participates in this authority. As we also saw in the discussion of Tradition, all the faithful are recipients and bearers of revelation and have an active role in its transmission. Parents do this when they fulfill their responsibility of ensuring the Christian nurture of their children. "Do not imagine that parents are doing a small thing when they proclaim the Gospel as the Church has to do. Did not St. Augustine tell fathers of families that they are a kind of bishop?"[57]

Another significant way in which the laity shares in the authoritative teaching of the Church is by contributing to the total Church's understanding of the meaning of revelation.

Such insight has been made possible by the special gifts of discernment that God has bestowed upon lay persons throughout the history of the Church.

> Nobody will deny that much has been brought to the Church in respect of knowledge of God by such people as the two St. Teresas (in whom popes have acknowledged a real attribute of doctor), St. Margaret, Mary, Barbe Acarie, Pascal, Gaston de Renty, and more than one contemporary. But their contribution, however striking and fruitful, draws all its worth from the conformity with the apostolic rule of teaching, and its subordination to and co-operation with hierarchical teaching, even when it exceeds the latter in depth.[58]

But as indicated, the authoritative value of a particular interpretation can only be granted by the magisterium.

In the light of history, the question of hortatory and apostolic teaching with regard to the laity, is a complicated one. Congar readily acknowledges that in the early centuries of the Church lay preaching was a frequent phenomenon. It was with the appearance of certain abuses and exaggerations during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries among the Waldenses and the Humiliati of northern Italy that certain restrictions began to be developed. Lay preachers were required to receive permission from a parish priest before they were able to preach. With the advent of the Protestant Reformation, a canon law was formulated, which still holds, that lay people (including the religious) are forbidden to preach within a church.[59] But these regulations,, Congar suggests, are not as limiting as they might seem.

The laity does participate in witnessing. While preaching, strictly defined, is directed to the faithful, witness is addressed to those outside the community of faith. Because lay persons live their lives in and have a special knowledge of the world, they are to be involved in mission and evangelization. It is for this reason that Congar suggests that the laity are particularly apt in the realm of apologetics.

> Defense and explanation of the faith has been expressly and directly undertaken by many lay people. Pascal in the seventeenth century is not an isolated example; many could be given from the French Revolution down to our own time--Chateaubriand, Joseph de Maistre, Goerres, Donoso Cortes, Auguste Nicolas, Brunetiere, G. K. Chesterton are only a few of them, without naming any living persons. It is true that not all the work of these men is above criticism; but it cannot be denied that they produced a real apostolic teaching in the apologetical field. Lay thought and witness elaborate values which are much less well appreciated by the Church's ministers; not being professionals, lay people are given a more ready hearing and can handle things more effectively. Above all, being in closer touch with secular life and more at liberty to experiment in their methods and approaches, their efforts appeal more directly to the needs of their contemporaries; sometimes their work is more satisfactory in meeting that requirement of all living thought, the creation of values; and it is more successful in establishing the spiritual contact between the Church and the world which is so valuable to apostolic work.[60]

On account of the fact that it is at the juncture of the Church and the world, the laity has unique skills and opportunities to express the relevance of the Gospel to the non-Christian.[61] This is done not only through the words of the laity but also through their being active signs of the Gospel. Not only a person's discourse, but also the style of his life can be a call to faith. The same is true of the style of a family or a parish. Each can be a sign of God's grace, and summons to life in Christ.[62] However, the sign is to be completed by the Word. Catholic doctrine is to be professed openly and courageously.

In the area of scientific teaching, Congar affirms that laity can participate. Of course, like the clergyman, the lay person is subject to the criteria of faith, Scripture and Tradition, including the authority of the magisterium. And as a scholar his work is subject to the judgment of the scholarly community. In this respect, he is in exactly the same footing as the cleric. The priesthood, as such, does not confer any charism of theological learning.[63] And history provides ample evidence to support the competence of the laity in theological matters.

Having made these affirmations, Congar nonetheless also holds that priests have a certain "advantage" in theological matters over lay persons.

> The laity, giving utterance to the questings and strivings of the world, can bring a wealth to the Church that it is their mission to dedicate to God. But they never handle theology like priests, they have never quite the same contact with the Church's tradition. It is not simply that the priest, conscious of the pastoral effect and consequences of his words and works, takes nicer account of all the factors and tries to balance them: having the priestly charism, celebrating the mysteries, he has to a greater degree living contact with the realities of tradition.[64]

For this reason, Congar suggests that the laity should primarily direct their attention to correlating the Church's dogmatic tradition to contemporary man's most pressing problems and questions, rather than simply playing within the circle of theological formulation. The lay scholar has a unique role to fulfill through exploring the relations between the Christian faith and such disciplines as philosophy, sociology, and history. Having the advantage of being less bound by accepted positions and methodologies, he is more nearly able to blaze new trails and to support valuable but unpopular theories.[65] At the same time, his advantage is also his disadvantage. He runs the constant risk of being too strongly influenced by his various cultural ties. Thus, in this area, as in every aspect of the laity's participation in the prophetic work, the Church's life remains dependent upon and judged by its structure. Yet the initiatives of the life-pole are invaluable for the teaching mission of the people of God.

Before concluding our discussion of Congar's theology of the laity, we must deal briefly with his concept of lay holiness. He indicates that the Church's understanding of lay holiness has been dominated by the monastic model. It was only with the breakdown of the Medieval synthesis that the things and affairs of the world were seen as having a value in themselves. Congar holds that this was not an anti-Christian development. And he states that there is significant theological support for his position. The doctrine of creation upholds the goodness of the world. An essential dimension of the Incarnation is that it indicates that God loved the world.[66] And we have seen that an adequate doctrine of eschatology must include the reconciliation and incorporation of the world into Christ as Omega.

The lay Christian is called to work directly in this world of finite realities. This does not mean an affirmation of laicism, which gives the realm of secondary causes its proper value but simultaneously rejects the reality of the First Cause. For Congar, an adequate interpretation of lay holiness involves a concept of double loyalty: first to God, and secondly to the world.[67]

As the design of sacred history indicates, God is not only the source of all reality but he seeks to enter into full and complete communion with it. All vocations have their place within this divine plan. And there are two different orders of vocation, corresponding to the orders of creation and redemption. The laity participates primarily in vocations that belong to the order of creation, while the religious and clergy primarily have vocations in the order of grace. Yet as was suggested in Chapter Two, these two orders are not to be separated or isolated from each other. The order of creation has its ultimate meaning in Christ ("Christofinalization").

> One can speak of an "Adamic function" of creation, and a "Christic function" of redemption, provided that the connection of the the first with the second is made clear, and that they are not referred respectively to the laity and clergy: creational tasks ("Adamic function") are more especially the business of the laity, but their final meaning is in Christ and they do not prevent lay people from having their part in the redemptive function and duties of the Church....[68]

The two vocations are part of God's unitary design.

Because he is God's faithful servant in the world, the layman takes his work or employment seriously. He strives to be competent and efficient. In addition, the lay person is involved in the economic, social, and political realms, seeking to overcome the brokenness of mankind by establishing wholeness. By taking part in actions which help to fulfill the original intent of creation, the lay person participates in God's historical design.

> That is why it is not ridiculous to hold oneself responsible before Society, the World, Mankind, History, or to write those words with capital initials--they designate so many faces of God, since they represent so many orders of his will.[69]

Wherever peace or justice is being pursued, there is an authentic place of service for the Christian. In a world of bitter conflicts, the Christian layman uses all of his skill and resources to serve his fellow man--and he does this with more courage and confidence than the pure humanist because he believes in "God wholeheartedly enough to believe in man as God believes in him."[70]

The lay person is addressed by and responds to the same Gospel as the monk and the clergyman. There are not two different Gospels. The one Gospel applies to all men. The layman in the world is a pioneer functioning between the orders of creation and redemption. Within the conditions of history, he participates in forming parables or signs of the Kingdom. What he achieves is always short of what he intends. This is why he only enacts signs. All of his life is lived under the Cross. He chooses to serve in the world, realizing the suffering that may be involved because of his rejection of the ways of a fallen creation. He knows that only at the end of history will the Church reign in glory and power with its Lord.

To summarize, in all three aspects of Christ's work that are continued by the Church, the laity richly contributes to the mission of the Church. But this is possible only because they build upon and are shaped by the structure of the Church. The laity's part in the priestly, kingly, and prophetic functions never, in any sense, constitutes the Church. It does express the life of the Church, which is always established and nourished by the structure.

In the following two chapters, the central importance of the categories of structure and life in Congar's ecclesiology will become even more evident. As will be indicated in the next section, his whole project of developing a synthesis of the major images and definitions of the Church is motivated by the desire to establish a "balanced" interpretation of the reality of the Church, which, among other things, means that both the structure-pole and the life-pole receive adequate emphasis. Similarly, in the chapter on reform, it will be observed that these categories play a crucial role since Congar argues that in authentic renewal both poles must be honored.

Notes to Chapter IV

[1] Congar, Lay People in the Church, p. 262.

[2] Congar, Sainte Église, pp. 78-79.

[3] Congar, Lay People in the Church, p. 262.

[4] In his writings, Congar uses other pairs of terms in an identical or similar manner to that of structure and life. He speaks of the urbs and orbis of the Church, of the Church from above and the Church from below, of the Church as an institution and as the people of God or a communion, and of the Church as sacramentum and res.

[5] The first part of Chapter One outlines this one-sided emphasis in Roman Catholic ecclesiology.

[6] Congar, Lay People in the Church, pp. 262-263.

[7] Congar, Power and Poverty in the Church, p. 62.

[8] Ibid., pp. 62-63.

[9] Yves Congar, O.P., "Institutionalized Religion," in The Word in History, ed. by T. Patrick Burke (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1966), p. 133.

[10] Ibid., p. 135.

[11] Ibid., p. 140. For a more detailed analysis of the dangers of "empty formalism" see the discussion of the temptation to Pharisaism and the temptation to behave as a synagogue in Chapter Five.

[12] Yves Congar, O.P., "Seeing the Church," Doctrine and Life, XIII (October, 1963), p. 95.

[13] Yves Congar, O.P., Divided Christendom, trans. by M. A. Bousfield (London: The Centenary Press, 1939), p. 100.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Congar, "Seeing the Church," p. 98. The statement to which Congar refers reads: "'The eternal Pastor and Bishop of our souls' (I Pet. 2:25), in order to render the saving work or redemption perennial, willed to build a holy Church, in which as in the house of the living God, all the faithful might be contained by the bond of one faith and charity." (Denzinger, The Sources of Catholic Dogma, p. 451.) In Chapter Seven we will deal with the ecumenical implications of this understanding, particularly as ~~it~~ related to the formula of "return to

Rome," and the way in which Congar seeks to develop a position which allows for "the others" to positively contribute to the "building" of the Church.

[16] Congar states that Vatican II has incorporated this missionary or life element in its explication of the Church's unity. This is expressed quite clearly in the following passage: "The status of this People is that of the dignity and freedom of the sons of God, in whose hearts the Holy Spirit dwells as in his temple. Its law is the new commandment to love as Christ loved us (cf. Jn. 13:34). Its end is the kingdom of God, which has been begun by God himself on earth, and which is to be further extended until it is brought to perfection by him at the end of time, when Christ, our life (cf. Col. 3:4), shall appear, and 'creation itself will be delivered from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the sons of God' (Rom. 8:21). So it is that the messianic People, although it does not actually include all men, and at times may look like a small flock, is nonetheless a most certain seed of unity, hope and salvation for the whole human race. Established by Christ as a communion of life, charity and truth, it is also used by him as an instrument for the redemption of all, and is sent forth into the whole world as the light of the world and salt of the earth (cf. Mt. 5:13-16).... While it transcends all limits of time and national boundaries, the Church is destined to extend to all regions of the earth and so enters into the history of mankind. Moving forward through trial and tribulation, the Church is strengthened by the power of God's grace which was promised to her by the Lord, so that in the weakness of the flesh she may not waver from perfect fidelity, but remains a bride worthy of her Lord, and moved by the Holy Spirit, may never cease to renew herself, until through the cross she arrives at the light that knows no setting." ("Constitution on the Church," in The Teachings of the Second Vatican Council, pp. 83-84.) The phrase "seed of unity" particularly points to the dynamic and missionary dimension in the mark of unity.

[17] Congar, Sainte Église, p. 183.

[18] Ibid., p. 184.

[19] Congar, The Mystery of the Church, p. 54. The development which takes place between Christ as Alpha and Christ as Omega, that was discussed in the previous chapter, is the same process that is being referred to here.

[20] Congar, "How Christian is the Christian Church?," p. 99.

[21] Congar, Sainte Église, p. 158.

[22] Congar, La foi et la théologie, p. 69.

[23] Since Congar's explication of catholicity in his first major work, *Divided Christendom*, in which there is a strong emphasis upon the need for subordinating values outside the Roman Catholic Church, he has increasingly stressed the development of catholicity and the fact that other Churches will have their own "riches" to contribute to the Roman Catholic Church in any eventual reunion. He, of course, still maintains that there is an essential truth in the earlier view, but if it alone receives attention the tendency is to ignore the need for purification and reform within Roman Catholicism and to ignore the positive developments that have occurred outside the visible boundaries of the Roman Catholic Church. What is valid in the earlier emphasis--and even within it there are strong elements of the later position--is that it indicates that the true Church already exists and that any union must be reunion with Rome. See *Divided Christendom*, pp. 93-94 ff., and *Dialogue between Christians*, pp. 96, 114.

[24] Congar, "How Christian is the Christian Church?," p. 102.

[25] See Hendrick Kraemer, *A Theology of the Laity* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1955); J. C. Hoekendijk, *The Church Inside Out*, trans. by Isaac C. Rottenberg (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964);

[26] Yves Congar, O.P., "Sacerdoce et laicat dans l'Eglise," *La Vie Intellectuelle*, XIV (1946), pp. 6-36; Yves Congar, O.P., "Pour une theologie du laicat," *Etudes*, CCLVI (1949), pp. 42-54. Other influential theologians who soon made important contributions are: H. Urs von Balthasar, G. Philips, Karl Rahner, and E. Schillebeeckx. For a brief outline of these men see: E. Schillebeeckx, O.P., "La definition typologique de laic chretien selon Vatican II," in *L'Eglise de Vatican II*, ed. by Guilherme Barauna, O.F.M., Unam Sanctam LI (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1966), Vol III, pp. 1027-32.

[27] Congar, *Lay People in the Church*, p. 3.

[28] *Ibid*., pp. 4-6.

[29] *Ibid*., p. 6.

[30] *Ibid*., p. 7.

[31] *Ibid*., pp. 7-8.

[32] *Ibid*., pp. 12-14. Congar comments that this unfortunate division eventually led to two extremes. On the one hand, some theologians will see the Church actualized in a priesthood without lay people. On the other hand, the Church will be seen by others as just the congregation of the faithful. The latter path led to the Reformation. (*Ibid*., p. 15.)

[33] *Ibid*., p. 17.

[34] Congar comments that these three offices were first systematized in Calvinistic theology. Yves Congar, "The Laity," in *Vatican II: An Interfaith Appraisal*, p. 244.

[35] *Ibid*., p. 159.

[36] *Ibid*., p. 160.

[37] *Ibid*., pp. 168-69. Cf. Congar, *Sainte Église*, pp. 59-60.

[38] Congar, *Lay People in the Church*, p. 169.

[39] Congar, *Sainte Église*, p. 65.

[40] Congar, *Lay People in the Church*, p. 156.

[41] *Ibid*., p. 212.

[42] *Ibid*., p. 216.

[43] *Ibid*., p. 218.

[44] Ibid., pp. 218-19. Congar stresses in this work, written a decade before Vatican II, that the faith and prayer of the laity are not just inward and personal. This is seen in the response to the priest's call for the congregation's prayer, the dialogue which leads to the preface ("Let us give thanks to the Lord our God"--"It is meet and right"), in the kiss of peace, and in the different "Amens." Here is a good example of Congar translating the "results" of liturgical renewal into the heart of the theological enterprise.

In this context it should also be noted that Congar has suggested that the laity should commune in both elements. (*Ibid*., p. 223. Cf. Congar, *Report from Rome*, Vol. I, pp. 37-38.)

[45] *Ibid*., pp. 220-21. A rather lengthy quotation suggests the way in which Congar develops this concept of transforming the world. "What are, in fact, the bread and wine which make up our offering? These are products of the soil, simultaneously humble and sumptuous, common and noble. They are produce that are relatively natural but also worked upon, and this in two stages: first by cultivation; ...Secondly by a process which transforms the wheat into bread, and the grapes into wine. Thus that which we offer is not only the first fruit of creation, but a sign and first fruit of the work by which man completes creation and ennobles it by raising it to the level of human culture, of human labor.

"In this labor, moreover, the bread and wine do not hold just any place. They incorporate significant aspects, an idea expressly pursued in the scriptural texts. Bread nourishes the traveler and restores his strength; it is ordained for the work of life. Bread is especially something that one shares with other people. The New Testament when it speaks of bread evokes the image of the father of the family who takes a loaf, says grace, breaks it, and distributes it to those who share his table. Bread is essentially something which maintains life but also something which one shares (cf. John 13:18) and, thanks to which, one participates with others in the joy of life (cf. Luke 14:15).

"This note of joy dominates even more strongly the biblical evocations of wine, the abundance of which is a sign of the benediction of God. In the thought and on the lips of our Savior, wine is also related to the idea of newness. Wine announces a new state of affairs, beneficial and joyous, seen imperfectly beyond the present state of misery. It has a meaning of promise.

"...These are truly the first fruit of creation, but worked on by man and connoting the hope of a renewal by God: the revival, the result, the renewal to which creation aspires (cf. Romans 8:20).

"All of the New Testament shows us that this completion and renewal must be accomplished by and in Christ." (Congar, *Les voies du Dieu vivant*, pp. 210-11.)

[46] Congar, *Lay People in the Church*, p. 223.

[47] *Ibid*., p. 225.

[48] *Ibid*., p. 236.

[49] *Ibid*., p. 238.

[50] *Ibid*., p. 240.

[51] Congar, *Priest and Layman*, p. 329.

[52] Congar, *Lay People in the Church*, p. 241. It is in this context that Congar supports the right of the Christian to refuse involvement in the ordinary course of worldly affairs. Like all forms of Christian refusal, such vocations provide a basis for a more profound engagement. Thus they are not in any sense an escape or retreat. "Certainly one must be specially called; but such a vocation is a normal thing, and it must be respected as a total engagement in the work of God's Kingdom, *opus Dei*. Most commonly (but without prejudice to other possible calls) this spiritual kingship is found in the monastic life, for which one leaves the world, and in virginity, by which one withholds oneself from the fundamental work of the world, which is to ensure its continuance." (*Ibid*., p. 252.)

[53] *Ibid*., p. 246.

[54] *Ibid*., p. 250.

[55] *Ibid.*, p. 258.

[56] *Ibid.*, p. 295.

[57] Yves Congar, *Laity, Church and World*, trans. by Donald Attwater (BaltimoreL Helicon Press, 1960), p. 76.

[58] Congar, *Lay People in the Church*, p. 298.

[59] *Ibid.*, pp. 300-302.

[60] Congar, *Lay People in the Church*, pp. 304-305.

[61] Congar makes a sharp distinction between proselytism, on the one hand, and evangelization, on the other. Proselytism is concerned with the victory on one's own denomination. It sees everything within the canonical boundaries of the Church as good and everything outside of them as bad. Instead of going forth in love alone it inevitably lapses into a concern for organization and propaganda. Technique begins to rule. In contrast, evangelization seeks man's spiritual good, that is, his life and progress in Christ. It is humble and serving--and respectful of the other. It has respect for the mystery of human freedom and the mystery of the ways in which God's grace works in the hearts of men. And it recognizes that true faith involves free and responsible adherence. (Congar, *Priest and Layman*, pp. 36-46. Cf. Congar, *Laity, Church and World*, pp. 86-87.

[62] *Ibid.*, pp. 76-79.

[63] Congar, *Lay People in the Church*, p. 307.

[64] *Ibid.*, p. 310.

[65] *Ibid.*, p. 311.

[66] *Ibid.*, p. 72.

[67] *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23, 107.

[68] *Ibid.*, p. 432.

[69] *Ibid.*, p. 436. Cf. Congar, *The Wide World My Parish*, p. 121.

[70] Congar, *Lay People in the Church*, p. 448.

CHAPTER V

A PLURALISTIC DEFINITION OF THE CHURCH

Congar raises the question of whether or not the nature of the Church can be defined. He answers in the affirmative, although he suggests two important qualifications. The first one is that the Church is a mystery. Since it has its foundation in God's covenant with man, it can never be reduced to purely human dimensions. No sociological or historical study can even begin to exhaust its meaning. The second qualification is that the reality of the Church is too rich to be able to express it in a single concept or definition. For this reason, one does not find one image of the Church but a vast number in the New Testament. The first interpreters of the nature of the Church were aware that certain of its elements would not be adequately stressed if only a single concept was used. Congar copies this model. He uses a variety of concepts in order to move towards what he terms a synthesis. In this chapter, we will examine his treatment of six concepts: People of God, Body of Christ, society, communion, universal sacrament of salvation, and servant. Attention will be given to what he considers the adequacies and inadequacies of each notion. The result of this analysis should yield a clear understanding of the manner in which Congar seeks to formulate a doctrine of the Church in which he does justice to every one of its major aspects--one which is nourished by all of the deepest ecclesiological currents of Scripture and tradition.[1]

The most obvious advantage of the concept of the people of God for defining the reality of the Church is that it indicates that the Church must be understood within the framework of sacred history. As a result, this concept points to the whole cluster of themes that are a part of God's plan in history. For instance, it implies that the Church is to be understood in terms of election. Against all views that hold that the Church should be introvert and separate from the world because of its superiority, this definition makes it clear that the Church's calling is not just a privilege but always a means to service and mission. "Someone is selected and set aside to fulfill a plan of God that is beyond the power of the one chosen."[2] And because it is chosen by God to serve, the Church must be seen as having a dynamic and forward thrust. Also, the concept of people of God connotes the important motif of promise and fulfillment. It suggests that the Church must be seen to be in tension with its future, with the complete coming of the Kingdom.

> One can readily see that the expression has a power dynamism. It presupposes a plan of salvation that is going to be realized, a plan seen and proclaimed by the prophets; the Messiah, the messianic people are bearers of a message that inspires hope about the collective destiny of man: they bring the promise of salvation. Among the prophets, in the gospels (the significance

> of so many "signs" and cures), and in apostolic writings, this salvation is not purely individual and "religious": it is total.[3]

In a world that is characterized by appealing secular eschatologies, such as Marxism, Congar is convinced that it is important that the Church's eschatological and messianic character be emphasized.

The second major value that Congar finds in the concept of the people of God is what he terms its "anthropological" value. Because of his conviction that Roman Catholic ecclesiology has too often forgotten--in its emphasis upon the hierarchical structure--that the Church is made of men, Congar believes that this idea restores the essential affirmation that the Church is composed of a whole people who have responded to God's call. It underlines the fact that the structure-pole exists in order to "create" the life-pole. Furthermore, it points to the truth that while there is a unity in the Church there is also a diversity of gifts for performing various tasks and that these are not limited to the clergy.[4]

The third advantage of this concept is that it stresses the historicity of the Church. It points out that the Church is not only an institution that is grounded in the revelation of Jesus Christ and sustained by the Holy Spirit, but that it is also a community of men who seek God's forgiveness and the strength to be obedient disciples. It is not only an instrument of God's grace (structure-pole) but the gathering of men (life-pole) who are in perpetual need of reform. Interpreting the Church as the people of God allows one to speak of it dialectically, to state that it is holy but sinful, perfect but requiring restoration and renewal.[5]

The final major value of defining the Church as the people of God is that it indicates the universality and catholicity of the Church. Beginning with the call of Abraham, it is one people that is recruited and assembled throughout time and space for the Kingdom of God. Although destroying no valid national or cultural values, the Church as the people of God transcends all of these differences. It calls for recruits from every sphere and level of humanity. And by affirming that the Church is God's, this idea points out that loyalty to Him supersedes all other loyalties. It has its own assembly, hierarchy, insignia, custom, and law--all of which are characterized by the love of God and the love of neighbor.[6]

These are all points that are not sufficiently mentioned or developed in those traditional presentations of the nature of the Church which are primarily juridical and non-historical in character. Even so, Congar is not satisfied with the concept of the people of God as the sole definition of the Church. The basic reason for this is one that we have already encountered, namely that it does not sufficiently distinguish the reality of the New Covenant from that of the Old Covenant.[7] It expresses what is common between the two dispensations rather than what differentiates them. As explicated in the chapter on sacred history, Jesus Christ is the center of God's design and gives meaning to its totality. Through the Son of God men are given the opportunity to become sons of God by adoption. The promise is no more in effect. It has been fulfilled. Conditions have radically changed. There is still a tension between what is now and what is not yet fulfilled. But this does not mean that the Church is still in the state of promise. Christ has come. And He has established the structure of the Church by which His work will be completed. In brief, the concept of the people of God is not sufficiently Christological. The Church is the new people of God. A once-for-all renewal has taken place.

> The Church is the new people of God, not in the sense that the first disappeared and another was brought in from the outside. No, it is truly the same, but renewed: and hence the same yet not the same. Thus the Church is Israel, the "true" Israel, the inheritor of the promises which are henceforth registered to its advantage.[8]

For Congar, this "newness" is best expressed in the next definition to be examined, the Body of Christ.

The primary merit then of the concept of the Body of Christ is that it affirms the radical uniqueness, finality, and universality of the New Covenant, The people of God is also truly the Body of Christ. Only in this way is there a strong enough Christological reference.[9] The Church is under the constant influence of Christ, receiving its essential reality from him. Those of its actions which are faithful to and express the Gospel are really his actions. They are under his "auspices."

> Christians altogether animated by the same spirit and acting in the name and under the impulse of the same Lord, form a single whole, the Body of Christ. For, as the body is animated by the soul, which makes visible and expresses in all kinds of actions, so the Church is animated by Christ, makes him visible and expresses him in its various activities.[10]

The concept of the Body of Christ expresses more adequately than any other the "closeness" and depth of the relationship that exists between Christ and the Church.

The image of the Body of Christ is also uniquely apt in signifying the vital connection between the two major sacraments and the reality of the Church.

> Faith is the ground on which we are justified and we grow as members of Christ through acts that are animated by a living faith; but it is Baptism that incorporates us in him, and the Eucharist that makes us all a single body, his Body.[11]

Christ as the New Adam continues his work of re-creation not only invisibly but also through the visible means of the sacraments. Like the concept of communion, "The Body of Christ" expresses the reconciling power of the Gospel as it is actualized in the Church. Human existence, in general, is marked by division and alienation. In contrast, the Church is a fellowship of exchange and harmony. With its strong connotation of a plurality linked together and working as one because it has one Head, Christ, the idea of the Body of Christ exhibits the unity which is the goal of all creation.[12]

And like the people of God, the image of the Body of Christ indicates that every member has an active and inter-related "role" to play in the Church.

> In the Body each one fills a part determined by his vocation, by the gifts accorded him, and by his state and function tion.... The Church is, then, presented to us as an organism in which certain functions ensure its perfection, in accordance with the will of God who bestows his gifts and vocations as he pleases.[13]

Against these ecclesiological positions within Roman Catholicism which tend to reduce the Church to its hierarchy, the concept of the Body of Christ is a strong reminder that such views present a dangerous abstraction.

Turning to those areas in which the concept of the Body of Christ needs to be complemented by other notions, the most obvious ones are the strengths of "the people of God." The former does not as explicitly put the Church in the context of sacred history. Hence such motifs as election and of the Church moving through history as the "messianic people" recede into the background. In addition, Congar criticizes two frequent interpretations of the ecclesiological meaning of "the Body of Christ." He indicates that at times the utilization of this concept has led to an unfortunate identification of Christ and the Church, a tendency which has been accentuated by the fact that often the notion of the Body of Christ was thought to be the sole focus for the definition of the Church. And he holds that this concept has been exploited on occasion by those who conceived the reality of the Church in a basically juridical manner. Before examining these two points, however, we must look at his summary of the results of biblical exegesis of this phrase.

Congar comments that although New Testament scholars are by no means in complete agreement in interpreting Paul's use of the concept of the Body of Christ, there are certain major points of accord. First, the term "head," kephale, in the Epistles of Captivity, Colossian and Ephesians is not a development of the earlier idea of "the Body of Christ" but an independent theme which is employed to emphasize the authority and sovereignty of Christ, vis-a-vis, the Church. Secondly, in Romans and First Corinthians, the stress is not upon the ecclesiological aspect of the body of Christ but upon the Christological and soteriological aspect, the body of Christ. The Church is the action and expression of Christ. The stress for Paul is always Christological.[14]

Congar believes that Roman Catholic theology must take seriously the frequent Protestant criticism that it has obliterated the essential distinction between the Church and its Lord. Ebeling has suggested that the major deviation of Roman Catholic theology has been its interpretation of the Church as the Body of Christ along the line of an organic unity between the Church and its Lord.[15] And there is Barth's famous criticism, to which we have already referred, that Roman Catholicism has done away with its "Gegenüber," and has entered into a monologue with itself.[16] Instead of the Church being under the Word of God, they coalesce. Of this type of criticism, Congar writes: "It is a very great question indeed, and we must not expect to put ourselves right in its regard at too small a cost."[17] We have seen that he wants to speak of continuity between "the time of Christ" and "the time of the Church," and that he sees Scripture, Tradition and the Church to be in harmony with each other. He believes that the Word of God as the norm of faith is immanent--although always as a gift--in the Church itself. But he also argues that there continues to be a tension and distance between the Church and Christ in this period between his first and second advent.

> To be sure, the Church does bear the mediation of salvation, but only as a minister of the sovereign action of Christ. Between the Church and Christ, this difference exists: in Christ the characteristics of minister of salvation and of source or principle (Head) overlap, while the Church is not the principle. Some distance still remains between the characteristic of mediatrix or sacrament and the Head who infuses her with life.[18]

For Congar, the Church is the sphere in which Christ "corporally communicates to the believer his own paschal destiny of death and resurrection."[19] The important point that the Church is the place where Christ has chosen to communicate himself does not imply that the two completely coincide.

> Christ, as kephale of the Church, is first of all the Leader who possesses authority over her. The powers of vital influx and interiority should not make us forget this aspect, which is primary and perdures. Christ is First, the Principle, Arche (Col. 1:18), and in a thoroughgoing way, in respect of everything which makes up the Church His body, its eternal structure no less than its intimate life. For the latter as for the former, Christ contains within Himself, as the peak of a cone contains its entire development, the fullness of all that will be unfolded in the body.[20]

Rather than opposition or identity between Christ and the Church there is a continuity in which the former is always the Source.

It is for this reason, as was indicated in Chapter Two, that Congar considers any notion of the Church as the continuation of the Incarnation to be inadequate. He acknowledges that this idea does have positive features. It expresses the dynamic development of sacred history and the affirmation that although in one sense all has been accomplished in and by Jesus Christ, the Church still plays an active role in this time of preparation for the full coming of the Kingdom.[21] But while in Christ there is a divine nature, in the Church there is only a covenant-participation in God's acts. The Church participates with God in the development of sacred history but it does not participate in his Being.[22]

The other interpretation of the Body of Christ which Congar rejects is one which treats it in basically a juridical manner. The image of Body lends itself to an explication of the Church in terms of its visible characteristic, and particularly the hierarchical ministry. (In Chapter One we observed that there is a strong element of this in Pius XII's encyclical Mystici Corporis.) For instance, Mystici Corporis identifies the Mystical Body of Christ with the visible boundaries of the Roman Catholic Church. In his early work Divided Christendom, Congar distinguishes between the Mystical Body and the Roman Catholic Church. He sees the Church as the instrument of the actualization of that which it essentially is, that is, the Mystical Body.[23] More recently he has followed the Pauline priority of understanding the concept primarily in Christological and soteriological terms, and only secondarily in ecclesiological ones. And he has buttressed the limitations of this concept by complementing it with others.

The third definition of the Church that Congar utilizes is the Church as a society. It has just been observed that he holds that certain interpretations of the concept of the Body of Christ view the Church primarily as a society, that is, a visible institution composed of men who have been baptized, who profess the same faith, who are tending to the same spiritual end, and who are under the hierarchical authority of the pope and of their bishop. It was also indicated that Congar sharply rejects this as the most important meaning of the Body of Christ. Consequently, it is hardly surprising that he not only denies the claim that the definition of the Church as a society is a complete and sufficient one by itself but that in addition he is critical of the fact that this notion has so frequently dominated mainline Roman Catholic ecclesiology. As he looks at the history of the theology about the Church, he is convinced that there has developed a one-sided view that has tended to identify the external and juridical aspects of the Church with its total reality. He is quick to admit that there have been important historical reasons for the Church to think predominantly in this way about itself. Because of such developments as the Cathers, the Waldensians, the Lollards, and the Hussites during the late Middle Ages and then the Protestant Reformation, Roman Catholic theology has stressed that which it considered to be under attack, namely, the Church as a visible and hierarchically ordered institution, with definite boundaries, rights, and powers.

Congar argues that the basis of the view of the Church as a society was not the Gospel but various philosophical concepts of society. These have then been "baptized," that is, it has been held that this society has its origin and goal in Jesus Christ. The teachings, life, death and resurrection of Jesus have not provided the fundamental understanding--only the facade. Thus for Congar, it is one thing to acknowledge the historical necessity which thrusts this view of the Church into the center of Roman Catholic ecclesiology, while it is another matter to continue to be controlled by the past without testing it by Scripture and other dimensions of Tradition. He indicates that when these norms are applied the concept of the Church as a society has two important limitations.

The most significant shortcoming of this definition is that it is not Christologically centered. It states that Christ is the origin and goal of the society. But it does see Him as the present source of life in the Church. As a result, there is a strong tendency in this view to hold that the hierarchy of the Church automatically represents the authority of God, without considering that their authority comes only through their fundamental relationship to Christ. Power in the Church is abstracted from Christ. The primary stress is upon offices being duly constituted rather than ~~upon~~ their being a means of holiness.

> The powers of the Church ... come to it directly from Christ, and the Church exercises them solely in the name of Christ, who remains always its actual head. The apostles and Peter and, after them, the episcopal body united to the apostolic See, are not Christ's successors; they are only his vicars; that is to say, they receive from him a power of proxy during his absence, while all the time he remains the master. In any case, what do we mean by "during his absence"? Christ is not in fact absent from the Church spiritually, but he is absent corporally and visibly, and it is only in this aspect that the hierarchy continues and represents him vicariously, rather as the the eucharistic species serve his bodily presence only from the point of view of visibility and localization.[24]

The Church, unlike "secular" societies, always has its living and present Source. The constitution of the Church is a direct development from this new life in Christ. Rather than having its life imposed on it externally, the Church receives life under the quickening guidance of the Holy Spirit. For instance, the Church does not find out how its authority is to be expressed by looking at secular societies and then mimicking them; it looks at the way in which the Gospel indicates that authority is to be expressed, namely, through service.

The second limitation of the concept of the Church as a society is a quite different one. Congar holds that this notion is based on an "outdated" sociology. He says that one must take into account the type of fundamental distinction that F. Tonnies has proposed between Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft, between community and association. If one employs this distinction then one must ask which category is the more adequate one for analyzing the nature of the Church. Congar believes that most Roman Catholic ecclesiology has opted for the latter. And as a result, the community aspect, with its stress upon personal encounter and personal relationahip, has been practically non-existent in such theology. The anthropological side, which was so important for the Church Fathers and Aquinas, is ignored. Below, it shall be indicated how Congar explicitly develops this concept of communion.

Congar does not believe that those definitions of the Church which use the adjectives "supernatural" or "Christian" to qualify the term "society" add appreciatively to this approach to ecclesiology. The reason is that these adjectives are usually ornamental rather than an attempt to substantively alter the point of view. Such definitions still hold to the "society" aspect and consequently continue to ignore the Gospel-foundation of the Church. They forget that the Church is a mystery that is beyond the grasp of natural reason, and thus they falsely attempt to base their understanding of the Church on the achievements of reason instead of on the revelation of Christ. The Gospel becomes a facade rather than the essence.

Nonetheless, Congar does admit that the concept of society is certainly legitimate and to some extent ecclesiologically fruitful. It prevents the Church from being interpreted as only a spiritual or super-historical reality. It is from this type of standpoint that he holds that Mystici Corporis was correct in balancing the concept of the Church as the Mystical Body with the concept of society.[25] There is a definite structure in the Church. This structure can assume different forms in the course of history (the papacy is a good example) and yet it is also eternal, visible, and identifiable. The concept of society points to this on-going visible structure, although it cannot adequately define it or in any sense exhaust its meaning.

George Lindbeck has suggested that Congar is one of the contemporary Roman Catholic theologians who interpret the Church as a communion.[26] Lindbeck is correct in making this assertion, as well as in qualifying it with the observation that for Congar the reality of communion cannot be separated from the visible and sacramental structure of the Church since the latter is the generative cause of the former.

The basis for holding that the Church is a communion is the triune nature of God. Against those views of the Church which interpret it solely in a monarchical framework, and which have consequently tended too easily to equate the total reality of the Church with the pope and the bishops, Congar argues that since the Church is ultimately grounded in the reality of God ecclesiology must seriously take into account that God is Three in One. Since God is a communion, the Church must also be one. The mistake of the monarchical view is that it has not developed the implications of Trinitarian doctrine for ecclesiology. Congar seeks to correct this.

He particularly stresses the importance of giving due weight to the Holy Spirit. There is no question that the communion (the Church) is founded and made possible by Jesus Christ. "All the studies of the idea of koinonia, communion, communication, and community in the New Testament conclude that there is communion between us and community because everyone participates in the same source through knowing Jesus Christ."[27] Yet as discussed earlier, it is the special task of the Holy Spirit, as the envoy of Christ, to complete His work. And the Spirit is the very principle of uniting love. Within the Godhead, it is the Holy Spirit that in one sense unites Father and Son and consequently it is the continuing principle of communion in the Church as the latter fulfills its destiny in history.[28]

This last statement indicates two advantages of the concept of communion which have already been discussed in detail. First, it is to be seen in terms of the whole plan of sacred history, since the latter is a movement from the establishment of communion between God and man in Christ as Alpha to the final fulfillment of this fellowship in Christ as Omega. In brief, this definition suggests the communion-nature of the New Covenant. Alienation describes the nature of life in the old Adam. Reconciliation describes life in the new Adam. The Church is the foretaste and agent of the communion that has already been initiated by God and which will be completed by Him.

A second advantage of this concept is that it clearly includes or points to the life-pole of the Church. It indicates that the Church is not only its structure but also its people. It underlines that the Church is not only a sacrament of salvation but is witness and mission. And it focuses upon the fact that action and presence of the Holy Spirit is not limited to the hierarchy.

As has been indicated, communion, for Congar, can be used to point to the life-pole of the Church in contrast to its structure-pole. But it also has a vertical meaning. Like the hierarchical principle, Congar sees the principle of communion applying at every level of the Church. Sometimes he uses the term collegiality when he discusses this subject, especially in referring to the hierarchy.[29] But whichever term he uses it is clear that he is referring to the same reality.

> Properly speaking, the collegial principle operates within the hierarchical order, but it is found as communal principle throughout the Church. The book of the Acts shows the Church assembled, unanimous, actively assenting to what is done; it calls her members "the brethren": it distinguishes these brethren from the hierarchical parts of the Church, apostles and elders; but this distinction does not stand in the way of association between the apostles or the bishops, the elders, and the brethren....[30]

In the vertical use of the term, collegiality or communion indicates the manner in which the various "parts" of the Church are organically related to one another--in addition to their hierarchical connection. And the dimension of community shapes or influences every other dimension of the reality of the Church.

> Collegiality appears to us to be a property flowing from the nature of the Church and qualifies its life. It expresses its profound nature as the Communion of saints. It desires and causes, in the exercise of its life, every man to be present in the act of another so that no one acts in a solitary manner. This finds its expression in the whole extension of Church life, in prayer for example ... but in a more particular way in the exercise of authority. We expressly say: exercise. Authority itself cannot be collegial; but its exercise must, to some degree and in one way or another, honor the necessity of collegiality, of communion, and therefore, far from excluding it, must unite as "co-responsible," all the other Christian persons who are part of the same body.[31]

Communion points to the openness and dialogical character of the Church, to the co-inherence of all its members--pope, bishops, priests, laity. In the next chapter, it will be indicated how Congar argues that this principle must be honored, if the continuing and necessary reform to which the Church is always called is to occur.

The early Church gives the definitive model to the way in which the hierarchical principle is always to be united with the collegial principle. In the New Testament, Peter, in Congar's view, is hierarchically first. The basis for this is his pre-eminence as a witness to the resurrection as described in I.Corinthians 15:3-8 and Luke 24:34.[32] Among the apostles, Peter is the first to receive that which is given later to all of them. "His testimony does not receive its worth through and in virtue of the testimony of the Eleven; but neither is it separate therefrom, and when Peter gives it, it is expressly offered as theirs also."[33]

As just implied, Congar also holds that there is equally strong evidence in the New Testament of the principle of collegiality. He indicates that this is particularly so in Acts, where there is an emphasis on the apostles forming a single agent of action.

> This is true of the apostles not only on such occasions as Acts viii, 14, and when the Holy Spirit is given to each one at Pentecost, but, whenever they are all gathered together and of one mind. The expression "The Twelve" has itself a collegial significance. This collegium is organized within itself: Peter is called to the first place in the order of apostolical function and its role of "constructing" the Church. But this hierarchical principle is combined with a principle of collegiality in virtue of which each one acts as a member of the college, in whose acts all take part--which is what we find in the life of the early Church, in St. Cyprian, for example, in the principle of the episcopate held and exercised in solidum.[34]

The organic unity of the collegial and the hierarchical principles in the early Church has often been destroyed in the history of Christianity. From the perspective of Roman Catholicism, Protestantism has been guilty of placing them in opposition to each other. And Congar readily admits that within Catholicism itself there has been a constant tension between those theologians who have tended to stress only one of these principles in their ecclesiology.[35] And since Roman Catholic understandings of the Church have so frequently been developed in opposition to Protestant ones, it has been the hierarchical principle that has usually been emphasized. Congar's own use of the concept of communion is thus characterized by an effort to restore the significance of the collegial principle and to indicate that in a "balanced" ecclesiology it is not in conflict but in harmony with the hierarchical principle.[36]

There are implications of a restored emphasis upon the Church as a communion, which affect every level of the Church. And Congar has frequently championed them. One example will suffice for our present purposes. Already in the early 1950's when Congar wrote Lay People in the Church and Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église he was supporting the existence of the various "small group" movements--whether they had been formed for biblical study, missionary endeavors, or to promote ecumenical interests. In general, he saw these movements as having a reforming and renewing influence within the total Church. And one of the major ways he saw them accomplishing reform was by seeking and expressing the principle of communion.

> Essentially, it answers to a need to rediscover the Church and, in a sense, to re-enter and renew her from below. Many of our contemporaries find that for them the Church's machinery, sometimes the very institution, is a barrier obscuring her deep and living mystery, which they can find, or find again, only from below, through little Church cells wherein the mystery is lived directly and with great simplicity. Of these cells Father Montuclard has written: "They are not one of the least symptoms of the structural insufficiency of the Catholic society. In the mind of those who form them, all (the cells) appear as an implicit protest against the rigidity and unadaptability of the forms of ecclesial society. They all find their place outside a properly ecclesiological organization...." Especially does Father Montuclard diagnose a dissatisfaction with the Church's actual structures, and his diagnosis is certainly right. A need is felt to seek, beneath

> the ready-made administrative machinery, a living reality of basic communities, the aspect in which the Church herself is, at the same time as an objective institution or hierarchical mediation, a community to whose life all its members contribute and which is patterned by give-and-take and a pooling of resources.[37]

In Congar's mind, these groups were pointing to the truth of the collegial principle, which, if taken seriously, would have a reforming influence upon the Church at a number of points, including the "style" of priestly life and the "shape" of parish life.

Since the more important disadvantages of the concept of communion have already been implied in our previous discussion in this chapter, it will be sufficient just to indicate how it is complemented by other concepts. The notion of the people of God has a more explicit historical and eschatological emphasis, particularly in indicating that the Church is still striving to move towards its goal. The definition of the Body of Christ has an obviously stronger Christological focus. And the concept of the Church as a society more clearly points to the hierarchical structure of the Church. Like the previous ones, ecclesiological concepts of communion need to be augmented by the others.

The fifth contributing definition of the Church that Congar utilizes is that the Church is the universal sacrament of salvation. Although it has not been as central to his thought as the idea of communion or the people of God, it has nonetheless been employed. In his early and seminal essay

"The Church and Its Unity"--in which he first begins to deal with the theme of the people of God--Congar writes: "The Church is, of its essence, sacramental."[38] And as we saw in our discussion of the Structure-pole, it is to be seen as being fundamentally sacramental in character. More recently, in 1965, he wrote an entire essay upon this subject.[39]

Seen as the universal sacrament of salvation, the reality of the Church is affirmed as having a strong Christological basis. Obviously, the Church only has the ability to be a saving sign and continuing instrument of grace through Christ. He is the center of sacred history. By uniting himself to human nature in Jesus, God has definitively acted to accomplish his plan in history, in spite of the disrupting force of man's sin. Christ is the perfect relationship between God and creation.[40] And in Him, the purpose of God has taken a visible and "public" form. After the earthly life of Jesus and by virtue of that which he has accomplished, grace continues to be presented by his "Body," the Church.

A sacrament is defined as a visible "form" through which God's grace comes to man. In this general sense, scripture can be seen as having a sacramental structure. Similarly, another person can be a visible means by which an individual encounters the grace of God. The seven "classical" sacraments are "particularizations" of the reconciliation accomplished by Christ in the sense that they relate to the basic and specific needs and situations of a person's life. The Church in turn is the totality of the visible forms through which salvation continues to be present in the world.[41]

Besides relating the Church to its Christological source, the definitions of the Church as the universal sacrament of salvation expresses the important point that the Church is never an end in itself. Like each of the seven sacraments, the Church is totally dependent upon the reality of its Lord. The Church has no absolute value in itself. Since Christ is always its source, the Church never leaves its status of dependency. When its sacramental quality is stressed, the structure-pole, as well as the Church as a whole, is seen in terms of ministry and service--in this way it overlaps with the definition of the Church as a servant.

Another advantage of this concept is that it also places the Church within the dynamic plan of sacred history. "The sacraments, and the Church itself as the great sacrament, are the place where the past which is the Christ-covenant is present in view of the future of the world, by the operation of the Holy Spirit."[42] The past acts of Christ come to man in the contemporary situation as an anticipation of the fulfillment of sacred history. The Church is the "instrument" by which the world is saved, and its marks of unity, catholicity, apostolicity, and holiness are a sign of what is ahead for the world.

> We can ... consider the whole Church as a sacrament of the return to God in Christ. In this regard, we can rediscover in the Church two great lines which cross all of salvation history and are recorded in holy Scripture. One is the line of pars pro toto, seemingly one of the constants

> of the activity of God, along with the gift of salvation is first made to a single individual or to a limited group, but is made for many or for all (Abraham, the "remnant" theme, Israel for humanity, Christ and the apostles for the world). The other line is that of descent, manifestation of the spiritual or heavenly realities (Epiphany), and of communication, going from the bosom of the Father to Christ, then to the Church, and then to the world. This dual dialectic leads to the sacrament of the Church, the philanthropy of God (Tit. 3:4-7) and of His universal will of salvation (I.Tim. 2:1-8). Yes, the Church is indeed the sign which is adequate expression of God's salvific will. The Church is the service, the sacrament, of the new and eternal covenant, the promise given to the world that there is salvation for it in Christ, kingly priest and priestly king. What Christ saves and must one day reunite in His Kingdom is mysteriously projected and assumed by this sacrament of salvation. This, in point of fact, is the meaning of the formula, "Outside the Church, no salvation," or of the formula found in the encyclical _Mystici Corporis_, "Ordered to the mystical body." What Christ must one day reunite in His Kingdom is projected by the sacrament and by the spiritual reality of His body on earth: the Eucharist and the Church.[43]

The Church is _the_ universal sacrament of salvation in that it alone has been given the mission and means by which humanity is to be incorporated into people of God.[44]

To summarize, there are several important advantages to defining the Church as the universal sacrament of salvation. This formula indicates that the Church is a servant of Christ and participates in his mission. As a result it indicates that the structure of the Church has been given in order to be the instrument by which humanity is brought into fellowship with God. It stresses mission. In addition, it directly points to the vital and intimate relationship that exists between the seven sacraments and the reality and the nature of the Church. And finally it connotes that the Church is a sign to humanity. Amidst all the alienation and meaninglessness of the world, it indicates that the Church in part and in a hidden way is already the eschatological reality which will one day be fulfilled.

The limitations of this are the reverse side of its advantages. It does not in itself sufficiently stress the life-pole of the Church. Although it does point to the design of God in sacred history, by "summing-up" this plan's past, present, and future, it does not have the pilgrim and developmental aspect that is a dominant dimension of the concept of the people of God. The final weakness of this concept is that it does not explicitly point to the importance of the laity in the life and mission of the Church in the same way as the themes of the People of God, the Body of Christ, and communion.

The final ecclesiological concept that plays a major role in Congar's theology is the Church as servant. It has been developed explicitly only in the last decade.[45] But it will become evident that some of the themes that cluster around this concept are ones that have long been an important part of Congar's thinking.

There are two major motivations for this new emphasis or turn in his thought. The first one is that through his examination of the person and work of Christ Congar began to develop a Christology of servanthood. Since ecclesiology has to be rooted in Christology for Congar, thishhas meant that he also has begun to look at the Church in terms of servanthood. The second motivation is Congar's realization--along with many other Roman Catholic leaders--of the Church's responsibility to the poor and deprived in a world that also is extremely affluent. The first reason is unquestionably the more important, although as our discussion proceeds it will be seen that they are closely related.

As was implied in Chapter Two, Congar holds that if one looks at the dominant movement of sacred history, one of the most prominent features is that God has consistently revealed himself in poverty. The election of Israel was not because of its military, political, or economical status. It was in spite of its worldly insignificance that it became the bearer of the revelation of Yahweh. For example, it was the apparently sterile wives who became mothers of the great Hebrew leaders: Sarah, Rebekah, Hannah.

> The history of souls and the witness of spiritual men speak in a fashion which is so much in agreement and which is so categorical that it seems necessary for us to consider as a law of the spiritual world, one as certain as the laws of the natural world, the necessity to be and to recognize oneself as wholly without resources, so that God might lift us to Himself. Yes, truly he fills the hungry with good things and sends the rich empty away (Luke 1:53). Is it because God is sovereign and wishes to be affirmed as such? He who exalts himself before Him (so much the more, he who exalts himself against Him), He brings low; he who acknowledges his poverty before Him, He fills.[48]

This propensity of God to reveal himself in poverty reaches its climax in Jesus.

Congar indicates that it cannot be without extreme significance to man that God became man in Jesus Christ.

> In Jesus Christ, God has united Himself to human nature, which is really one: He has thus made of all men His borthers.... In virtue of this solidarity, Jesus, God-made-man, draws men to form with him a single subject, entitled to the heritage of God (provided men receive the gift of God through a personal and free act of living faith).[47]

The theme of servanthood also dominates much of Christ's teaching and it characterizes the style of his life. The Sermon on the Mount rings out with the phrases, "Blessed are the poor," followed by "Blessed are you that hunger now, for you shall be satisfied." These in turn are followed by the curses which correspond to each of the beatitudes. "But woe to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation. Woe to you that are full now, for you shall hunger." There are many other examples: the parable of the wicked rich man and Lazarus, and the parable of the last judgment in Matthew 25. With regards to his life, the dominant characteristic is again one of humility and service. He was in constant contact with the poor, the despised, and the outcast. His suffering for others was climaxed by his crucifixion. This servant-form was not cast upon him, but one that he freely chose. All of this summed up in Paul's description: "For you know that grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich" (II Corinthians 8:9).

But the key description of Christ as servant for Congar is the text from Paul's letter to the Philippians, 2:6-11. Here Christ is described as reversing the process set in motion by Adam. Adam had been created as a free and obedient servant, but he yielded to the temptation to raise himself above this condition. He rebelled. He desired absolute independence. Christ, the second Adam, reversed this. He, who is divine, lowers himself to the human condition. He even accepts the destiny that man in Adam chooses: death. Rejecting the form of God, Christ takes the form of a servant. And in this act an amazing exchange occurs. God exalts Christ. And in Christ, mankind is also given the opportunity to be exalted. But prior to this exaltation, man must have obeyed the call to take on the form of a servant.

> We must enter into the law which constitutes the most specific part of the Christian ethic and which has us act as Christ--or, rather, as God has shown us in Christ, that He acts: to love as He loved, to pardon as He pardoned, etc. The great text from Philippians opens with these words: "Have this is mind among yourselves, which was in Christ Jesus." In this "marching in the footsteps," we are in the earthly phase, at the stage of descent and of service. To be obedient to the Christian law, which has its own intrinsic obligation, ...is to be born with this new birth, whose final goal is liberation, which means to descend to the lowest, to begin to exist with the poor.[49]

Throughout sacred history, salvation takes the form of kenosis--of condescension and service in love. "By desiring to exalt himself, man had degraded himself and had fallen. By agreeing to descend, man is once more, in Christ, set on his feet and once more takes up the path of glory."[49] But does this way of service apply to the Church as an organic body as well as to the individual believer?

This is a question that Congar has been asking with fervency and urgency.

> ...To what extent should and can the Church herself, the Church as such, apply to herself the Gospel requirements that tend to be restricted to individual Christians--forgiveness of enemies, turning the other cheek, choosing the ways of poverty, meeting the temptations of the spirit of possession and power, waging war against the flesh, etc?[50]

Congar states that if one looks at the Church Fathers and the Liturgy, which (as we have seen) are two of the major monuments of Tradition, one sees that the Gospel requirements apply to the Church itself. More importantly, there is a strong basis for this in Scripture. In the Old Testament, the individual can represent the whole nation, and, similarly, the nation represents the individual. In the New Testament, it is clear that an individual's salvation is only a possibility in so far as he participates in the people or Body of Christ.[51]

Thus Congar concludes that the mandates of the Gospel apply to the Church as such. But he observes that when one reads treatises on the doctrine of the Church one rarely finds any mention of this fact--a fact which has so many obvious and extremely significant implications for the mission and life of the Church. Congar also observes that on the other hand these documents have only very rarely defined the Church in terms of power. Bellarmine did state that the fifth mark of the Church was the temporal bliss or happiness of the Church's defenders.[52] But Congar says that this is an exception. However at the level of practice, in contrast to stated theory, the Church's affirmation of power and wealth, in Congar's mind, has been all too frequent.

Furthermore, he suggests that there are well-accepted ecclesiological concepts which make it very difficult to apply to the Church those aspects of the Gospel which demand servanthood. For instance, those views which stress the rights, privileges, and authority of the Church are not congenial to this approach. The same is true with those ecclesiologies that have tended to make a false separation between the reality of the Church and the persons who belong to it.

> It is not viewed as the object and beneficiary of the operations by which God sanctifies and creates a response in men but rather as exercising itself these holy operations, by ministerial co-operation with God.[53]

The danger in these positions is that they consider the Church as the possessor of God's grace rather than as the seeker of it. The structure-pole is not understood in terms of a sacrament, that is, as an "instrument" for establishing and nourishing the life-pole. The result is an ecclesiology of grandeur or glory--which is hardly compatible with one of servanthood. But Congar believes that the more recent stress upon the Church as the sacrament of salvation and as the people of God has been opening the way for seeing how servanthood applies to the Church as such.[54]

The most important thrust of the concept of the Church as servant is its stress upon mission and upon the way in which the Church engages the world. The Church, in a sense, continues Christ's mission. Its mission, following the example of its Lord, is one of humility and sharing. The Church in mission is the Church acknowledging that it does not live out of its own resources nor for itself, but lives out of the resources of God--and thus for him.[55]

The Church as servant, the Church in mission, involves being with those to whom it is sent. This means not only "spiritual care." It includes care for all of man's essential human needs. And it is here that the theme of Christ's servanthood clearly connects with the poverty of the world in an affluent society. Through adopting the way of servanthood, the Church, in its members, moves out into the world to be an agent of justice. Authentic humility is the movement away from slavery to freedom, from idolatrous attachment to the world to the just and right use of the world's resources.

> It is then no longer the world where one lives *for one's own enjoyment*, but the world God loved so much that he *gave* his only Son to it and in which he pursues a plan, with Christ as its principle, center and examplar, for its salvation and fulfillment. To be lost to the world *of the world* and to be born again to the world *of God* means to be committed to a life of spiritual freedom and of service--the conviction of which is a certain poverty.[56]

The love of wealth corrupts the human heart. It draws a circle around the self which excludes the neighbor.

> Anyone of us has but to look around and search his memory or experience: family quarrels, social injustice, lack of worry about the misery and humiliating conditions of others, callousness--all these derive, like a monstrous progeny, from attachment to money. It is the idolatry of the most hollow and ephemeral idol and instead of faith and hope in our Father, it engenders fratricide.[57]

Poverty is a part of the authentic Christian life.[58] And it is not satisfactory just to consider poverty as a spiritual value. Spiritual poverty must be related to material poverty.

> If we failed to do this, poverty as a religious attitude would have no value whatever as a gain and no relation with the world in which we live. Neither faith nor charity allows us to wash our hands of communion with this world, and our finest spiritual attitudes would run the danger of becoming mere neo-pharisaism and scandal.[59]

Authentic spiritual poverty demands that one do everything possible to do away with material poverty and human misery. It is beyond our present topic to consider the concrete ways in which human want is to be attacked. But it is worth noting that it involves not only a treatment of symptoms but an alteration of the structure of society which maintain poverty.[60]

As the next chapter will indicate, the disparity between the Church's facade and the Gospel's call to servanthood means for Congar that reform is needed. The fact that the Church has often assumed the appearance of privilege must be corrected. Luxury and splendour once may have suggested that there is an ultimate reality beyond the commonplace, but it no longer functions in this way. Instead it creates a barrier between the Church and much of the world's population.

> We can hardly doubt that a new humanity will be born of the inventions and discoveries of today. Wide horizons open before modern man. For him, the attraction of the Church will lie not in miraculous hagiography or ceremonial splendour, but far more in the truth he finds in her of the spiritual relationship of communion with others--a relationship founded on the genuine and exacting Gospel attitude of living faith, inward obedience, true prayer, love and service. God's beacons on the threshold of the atomic age are Therese of Lisieux, Charles de Foucauld, the Little Brothers and Little Sisters and their counterparts at Taize.... Men want the truth of the Gospel, its authenticity and simplicity, and on those conditions, they are ready to accept its demands ungrudgingly. We can no longer hope to dazzle men with purple and gold, heraldry and titles ending in "-issimus." He compels us now to show forth in our lives the truth of what we profess to believe and love with all our hearts.[61]

In an age in which the world has become purely "worldly," the Church is more free to be itself. It is once again seeing what it is to be a servant--that is, to be in the world instead of the world.

To recapitulate, this concept of the Church has several important advantages, It has strong Christological roots. It explicitly manifests an emphasis upon mission. And in a contemporary world that is often alienated by the Medieval and Renaissance features of the Church it points a way back to the "simplicity" of the Gospel. It indicates a presence in the world that is characterized by witness and humble concern rather than by domination.

Of course, like each of the previous five concepts, the Church as servant has its limitations. For instance it does not adequately point to the Church's visible structure, to its place in the total scheme of God's plan, or to its corporate character. Hence it too needs the unique contributions of the other notions. As already suggested, it is most closely related to the definitions of the Church as sacrament and as the people of God. But the concept of sacrament more adequately points to the absolute importance of the structure-pole of the Church. And the notion of the people of God more firmly locates the Church in the full context of sacred history. Similarly, the concepts of the Body of Christ and society more explicitly express the hierarchical order of the Church, while communion better reflects the ways in which the various levels of the Church are united in fellowship in Christ.

As suggested at the beginning of this chapter, Congar has adopted the biblical procedure of using a plurality of concepts to define the Church. Together they form a type of synthesis, which much more adequately expresses the nature of the Church than any single term. Moreover, this synthesis avoids the inevitable one-sidedness and distortions that develop when an ecclesiology is based upon only one or two of these definitions. By drawing upon all of them, both the structure-pole and the life-pole receive appropriate attention. By practicing biblical and Church history resourcement, Congar has thus attempted to develop a broader and richer doctrine of the Church than the ones that so long dominated Roman Catholic theology and practice.

Notes to Chapter V

[1] Congar, Sainte Église, pp. 40-42.

[2] Congar, "The Church: The People of God," p. 19.

[3] Congar, "The People of God," pp. 205-206.

[4] Congar, "The Church: The People of God," pp. 21-23.

[5] Ibid., pp. 23-24.

[6] Ibid., p. 27.

[7] Congar, Sainte Église, p. 25.

[8] Congar, Dialogue Between Christians, p. 448.

[9] Congar, "The Church: The People of God," p. 31.

[10] Congar, The Mystery of the Church, p. 27.

[11] Ibid., p. 30.

[12] Congar, Lay People in the Church, p. 94.

[13] Ibid., pp. 453-454.

[14] Congar, Sainte Église, p. 29.

[15] Gerhard Ebeling, Wort Gottes und Tradition (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964), p. 19.

[16] Barth, Church Dogmatics, I/2, pp. 538-39ff.

[17] Congar, Jesus Christ, p. 163. Cf. Congar, Sainte Église, p. 136.

[18] Congar, Jesus Christ, p. 157.

[19] Ibid., p. 143.

[20] Ibid., p. 142.

[21] Congar, Sainte Église, p. 101.

[22] Ibid., p. 87.

[23] Congar, Divided Christendom, pp. 103, 234.

[24] Congar, The Mystery of the Church, pp. 45-46.

[25] Congar, *Sainte Eglise*, p. 36.

[26] George Lindbeck, "Ecclesiology and Roman Catholic Renewal," in *New Theology No. 2*, ed. by Martin E. Marty and Dean G. Peerman (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1965), p. 193.

[27] Congar, "L'application des exigences evangeliques concernant la pauvrete. Les conditions et les motifs," in *Eglise et Pauvrete*, Unam Sanctam, Vol. LIX (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1965), p. 142.

[28] Congar states that the key biblical passage for this discussion is the benediction from II Corinthians 13:14: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." (*Les voies du Dieu vivant*, pp. 183-84.)

[29] Canan Charles Moehler has commented that for a long time French theologians with ecumenical interests tried to find a French equivalent for the Russian Orthodox term *Sobornst*, which expresses the organic, liturgical and pneumatological communion of all the people of God--pastors and laity alike. He indicates that Congar was the first to use the neologism "collegiality" to express this aspect of Orthodox ecclesiology. (Canon Charles Moehler, "History of Lumen Gentium's Structure and Ideas," in *Vatican II: An Interfaith Appraisal*, p. 129.) For Congar's explication of *Sobornst* and collegiality see *Lay People in the Church*, pp. 282-83. The French edition should also be consulted since part of this discussion is not included in the English text. (*Jalons pour une théologie du laicat*, Unam Sanctam, Vol. XXIII [Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1954], pp. 380-86.)

[30] Congar, *Lay People in the Church*, p. 282.

[31] Congar, "Conclusion," in *Le Concile et les Conciles*, pp. 301-302.

[32] Congar does not fail to mention, with his interest in developing a sound doctrine of the laity, that lay people were the first witnesses of the Risen Christ. "This privilege is forever theirs, and we are envious of their blessed fervency. Nevertheless, their testimony is as it were without properly ecclesial weight, without structural value for that apostolical witness on which faith is to be based. It belongs rather to the order of personal fervour; their part was to warn Peter--if one may dare to put it so, they had to get the hierarchy moving.... It was rather the same a little later, by the sea of Tiberias (John xxi, 1ff), an episode in which many exegetes see the fulfilment of Mark xvi, 7. John is the first to recognize Jesus, but he turns to Peter, and it is he

who takes the initiative and is thrice told to feed the Lord's flock. There are other incidents that follow the same rhythm and have the same meaning. Surely it is obvious that all members of the Church are active and active together as a whole, but not at the same level or in the same way." (Congar, *Lay People in the Church*, p. 281.)

[33] *Ibid*.

[34] *Ibid*., pp. 281-82.

[35] For an historical outline of the tension between these two positions see Congar, "Conclusion," in *Les Concile et les Conciles*, pp. 229-32.

[36] It is for this reason that Congar affirms that an adequate view of papal authority and power must be expressed in union with a theology of collegiality. For instance, instead of the universality of the Church being viewed either as simply the universal extension of a single Church, with only the Roman See as a point of reference and norm, or as existing only in a communion of local Churches that are identical in value and "personified" in their respective bishops, Congar holds the two principles (hierarchical and collegial) that are behind these two stances must be upheld. The universality of the Church is hierarchical as indicated by the fact that all Churches submit to the pope. Every Church is collegial in the sense that there is a fellowship between the various Churches--although Rome with its bishop, who is *episcopus universalis*, always has a unique position as moderator and guide. This fellowship is most explicitly expressed in the holding of ecumenical Councils. But it is manifested in every manner in which the fellowship of Churches is promoted. (*Ibid*., pp. 258-60. Cf. Yves Congar, O.P., "De la communion des Eglise a une ecclésiologie de l'Église," in *L'episcopat et l'Église universelle*, ed. by Y. Congar and B. D. Dupuy, O.P., Unam Sanctam XXXIX [Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1962], p. 260.)

[37] Congar, *Lay People in the Church*, pp. 348-49. Cf. Congar, *Vraie et fausse réforme dan l'Eglise*, pp. 22-59. It should be observed that the term "structure" is used in a different way than when Congar writes about *the* structure of the Church. Here it is used to refer to institutional forms. Of course, *the* structure also is expressed and conserved, as well as sometimes obscured, by institutional forms.

[38] Congar, *The Mystery of the Church*, p. 35.

[39] Yves Congar, O.P., "L'Eglise, sacrament universel du salut," in *Eglise vivante*, XVII (Sept.-Oct., 1965), pp. 339-55.

[40] Ibid., pp. 341-42.

[41] Ibid., p. 347. In this essay, Congar does not deal directly with the question of whether or not the Church is the basic sacrament in reference to which the seven sacraments receive their efficacy--a position held by K. Rahner and E. Schillebeeckx.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Congar, Jesus Christ, pp. 212-13.

[44] Cyprian's statement that "there is no salvation outside of the Church," and Congar's reaction to it will be discussed in Chapter 7.

[45] See Congar, Power and Poverty in the Church, which contains several essays on this subject. The first was written in 1962. Other places where the motif is developed are: Jesus Christ; "L'application a l'Eglise comme et les motifs"; "Poverty in Christian life amidst an affluent society," in War, Poverty, Freedom, Concilium, Vol. XV (Glen Rock, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1966), pp. 45-62.

[46] Congar, Jesus Christ, p. 67.

[47] Ibid., p. 75.

[48] Ibid., p. 84.

[49] Ibid., p. 27.

[50] Congar, Power and Poverty in the Church, p. 13.

[51] Congar, "L'application a l'Eglise comme telle des exigences evangeliques concernant la pauvrete. Les conditions et les motifs," p. 142.

[52] Ibid., p. 145.

[53] Ibid., p. 148.

[54] Ibid., pp. 150-52.

[55] Congar quotes Simone Weil's statement: "Humility is the refusal to exist outside of God." (Ibid., p. 136.)

[56] Congar, "Poverty in Christian life amidst an affluent society," pp. 57-58.

[57] Ibid., p. 62.

[58] For Congar, St. Francis is the Church's foremost example on this matter. "I am thinking of that scene where he broke with the carnal world to give himself up to life according to the Gospel. He had begun to commit himself to this life but still retained the disposal of family wealth which he dissipated with chivalrous carelessness and prodigality. His shocked father was concerned about this; he asked the bishop to summon Francis and to make sure that he would return the rest of his money. In front of the bishop, Francis threw off his clothes and put them at his father's feet with the solemn declaration: 'Let everyone listen and understand. Up to now I have called Pietro de Bernardone my father. But as I have decided to serve only God from now on, I return to Pietro de Bernardone the money he was worried about and all the clothes I received from him. Henceforth,,I shall no longer be able to say, 'My father Pietro de Bernardone,' but 'Our Father, who are in heaven.' There we have God recognized as the Father whom one expects to provide all things because he takes care of his creatures. Here we also have the relation of brotherhood which St. Francis saw as deriving from God's fatherhood, and we understand now that he extended it literally, and not just poetically, to animals and plants. One day a brother asked St. Francis permission to have a psalter. The saint replied 'When you have your psalter, you will want a breviary. And when you have a breviary, you will sit down on a chair like a fat prelate and you will say to your brother: 'Bring me my brevary.'" (Ibid., p. 61. Cf. Congar, Les voies du Dieu vivant, pp. 247-64.)

[59] Congar, "Poverty in Christian life amidst an affluent society," p. 62.

[60] Ibid., pp. 68-70.

[61] Congar, Power and Poverty in the Church, pp. 130-31.

CHAPTER VI

TRUE AND FALSE REFORM

Congar observes that if one examines the source of the history of the Church one must conclude that the Church has repeatedly been involved in reforming itself. Within the dynamics of its history, the people of God have always been caught between the desire for purity and a desire for plentitude. Theoretically, the Church includes both principles. The movement of sacred history is toward the goal of the reconciliation of all humanity into the Body of Christ. This involves an inclusion of all the truth that has existed in different cultures and in various eras into one eschatological Body. The "end" is a plentitude. But it is not just any type of plentitude. It is not just syncretistic. The values are to be included in the Body of Christ. This means that all falsehood is purified. At this level, the Church's principles of purity and plentitude are not in opposition to each other. But at the level of lived history, the relationship between the Church's purity and plentitude becomes much more complex.

As the Church moves out to minister in and to the world, the danger of syncretism always arises. The possibility appears that the Church may begin to simply reflect the culture it intended to transform. By assimilating aspects of the surrounding milieu, the Church risks losing its purity.

Consequently this tendency in the people of God has always been counterbalanced by reform movements, which have repeatedly called the Church back to its purity. Through a re-interrogation of the sources of Scripture and Tradition, reformers have reminded the Church that its mission is not any type of growth but the development of the plentitude of Christ.[1]

Thus at the level of its concrete existence, the Church is always tempted by two inadequate positions. It is always confronted by the danger of simply adapting to culture. And it faces the danger of becoming isolated from the world because it desires to remain only on the foundation of Christ. Congar strives to develop a third alternative which combines both the principles of purity and plentitude. He seeks to formulate an understanding and practice of reform which unites true evangelical _resourcement_ and the use of relevant forms which will convey and express the power of the Gospel in the contemporary situation: "to remain the Church of all time, while becoming the Church of our time."[2]

When one examines the course of the history of the Church, one not only discovers that reform has repeatedly been a part of its existence but that there also have been many and varied sources of reform. Often the Religious Orders have been reform movements. Sometimes popes have undertaken a general reform of abuses or even of outdated and ineffective institutional forms (Gregory VII, Innocent III). Reform has been motivated by evangelical and apostolic concerns (the founding of the Orders of St. Dominic and St. Francis). At still other times it has been the major concern of Church councils (the Councils of Lateran and the Council of Trent). And beyond this, every movement, even if it does not have the label "reform," which seeks to live and proclaim the Gospel authentically is involved in reform.[3]

For Congar, the fact that reform has always been a part of the rhythm of the history of the Church indicates that the concept of reform as such cannot simply be denied or cast aside by equating it with Protestantism. Moreover, the situation of the Church after World War II was of such a nature that the question of the possibility and nature of reform was far more than an abstract matter. It was, in Congar's mind, a burning necessity. Issue after issue presented itself--each of them implicitly or explicitly demanding reform: the need for an adequate understanding of the laity which would indicate that they are more than second-class members of the people of God; the need of the Church to find ways to minister to the working class; the urgency to experiment with more authentic forms of service and witness in a secular world; the demand for parish life to be shaped by the real needs of men; the desire for a less mechanical and a more relevant liturgy; the pressing importance of theology taking into account the homest questions that modern man is asking and of equipping the believer for his actual concrete existence. As Congar himself attempted to deal with these issues, and as he saw some of his fellow churchmen doing the same, he was struck by the fact that what seemed so necessary to them, seemed a almost heretical to others within the Roman Catholic Church. For him and his colleagues, the need for renewal and reform was so obvious as to be self-evident. But for others, it connoted disrespect for the Church of Christ. In the first chapter, part of this controversy was discussed. There is no need to repeat it, except to say that the "fallout" of the Modernist controversy was still very much present. This meant that as Congar attempted to work out the differences between authentic and inauthentic reform in _Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église_, he was analyzing this subject within combat conditions.

Although this work involved considerable theological and historical inquiry, it was written to provide possible guidelines for reform in the post-war Roman Catholic Church. It was addressed to both the conservatives and the progressives. Congar wanted to convince those who approached all ecclesiological matters from an "integrist" standpoint, that is from a desire to hold rigidly to the theological _status quo_, that reform was necessary not for the sake of change but for the sake of the Gospel. Congar also wanted to convince the many reform groups within the Church that reform must remain within a certain framework. Even though circumstances have changed since Vatican II, it would seem clear that the criteria for true reform that Congar developed almost two decades ago are still applicable--both to those within the Roman Catholic Church who have continued to resist the change in direction that was adopted by Vatican II, and to those who are discouraged over the slow progress that has sometimes been made not only in enacting some of the decisions but in moving further down the road on which Vatican II embarked.

Our analysis of Congar's principles of valid reform will approach the subject from several different angles. First, we will consider the question of whether or not the Church can be called sinful. Secondly, we will look at the way in which Congar distinguishes between three different levels of reform. Thirdly, we will examine the two tendencies within the Church, pharisaism and supporting the *status quo*, which often obstruct the reformation of the Church. And finally, we will observe the four conditions that Congar indicates are necessary to follow in order that reform of the Church might be true instead of false.

The central issue with regard to reform in the Church is whether or not one can state that the Church is sinful. If the position is held that it is incorrect to make this assertion, then it would seem to be rather superfluous to speak of any significant type of reform. For if the form of the Church cannot significantly deviate from the form of Christ, then there would appear to be little sense in speaking of reform, except on the most superficial matters. For example, it is sometimes held that one of the basic thrusts of the ecumenical movement is that it involves the receptance of all those who have been separated from each other. The Protestant theologian W. Nicholls has written:

> What was new in this ecumenical consciousness was that those who had it felt the judgment of God on the sin of schism addressed to *themselves*. They felt *themselves* called to repentance. The distinguishing feature of the ecumenical consciousness is that it is a consciousness of sin; the ecumenical movement is a movement of repentance.[4]

It is obvious that an ecclesiology of glory--one which identifies the Church with the risen Christ--and such an understanding of ecumenism as this one are incompatible. Congar has addressed, in considerable detail, this problem of how far and to what extent Roman Catholic theology can speak of a sinful Church and the need for it to repent, And he has given an answer that is simultaneously affirmative and negative.

He suggests that this dialectical response is necessary because of the fact that the Church is made both from above and from below--that it is both structure and life. The structure of the Church is holy. It cannot be otherwise. The second pole is sinful. Hence, in brief, one can accurately say that the Church is both holy and sinful. To acknowledge the first and to deny the second would be to fail to take into account the means by which God in Christ has chosen to fulfill his purpose of reconciliation. Thus both mustbbe affirmed. We must examine this response in more detail.

With regards to the structure of the Church it must be held that the Church cannot sin nor err. The elements--the sacraments, the apostolic and hierarchical ministry, and the deposit of faith--of the structure are infallible.

> We would call it in legal phraseology, the public institution established by divine right by Jesus Christ to mediate the salvation he offers us. If that is what one understands by "church" one cannot speak of sin, of schisms, or of repentence in connection with it. It is, in fact, none other than the very institution of the Lord. Jesus is within it as its source ("auctor").[5]

The structure of the Church is unsunderably united to Christ and because of this it is pure and holy. In this sense, the household of God is holy, independent of those who dwell in it.

> It is holy in its faith, in its sacraments, and in the apostolic powers derived from those of Christ and which are to fulfill the faith and the sacraments; it is objectively holy and cannot lose this holiness, which is inherent in those gifts that it receives from God. This is not any undue glorification of the ecclesiastical institution. To the contrary, it is the way in which the Church indicates the sovereignty or the action of God in it.[6]

The structure makes the Church a constant agent of the presence of Christ apart from the fluctuations of the human spirit.

But when one turns to the life-pole, it is appropriate and in fact necessary to speak of sin in the Church. The reason for this is that in this transition there is a shift from the gifts of God to the way in which man in his freedom responds to them. And, since each man is a sinner, there is sin in the Body of Christ. This is why penitence is always necessary. The Church must always pray: "Forgive us our trespasses." It is from this perspective that Roman Catholicism has repeatedly rejected the positions of those who have held that the Church consists of only the just and the holy: Montanism, Donatism, the Cathers, and the Hussites. The Church has never been without sin. Congar is quite clear in saying that it is an illusion that the early Church was without the divisiveness and brokenness that is the result of sin--an illusion that has been particularly advocated by those who have wanted the Church to return to its primitive state, to its golden age. In this time between Christ as Alpha and Christ as Omega, both wheat and tares are found in the Church. Both Cain and Abel belong. Moreover, each believer who belongs also has his own mark of Cain. Rather than being the gathering of the holy, the purpose of the Church is to purify believers of their sin. "The Church in the first sense of the word, that is, as the institution of salvation, accomplishes without ceasing the work of holiness in the Church in the second meaning of the word, that is, as the community of the faithful and the people of God."[7]

Thus far it is obvious that Congar is speaking only of the sins of individual Christians, who in one sense form the Church. But does he go further and say that the Church itself in sinful? It is at this point that the issue becomes much more complex. For one thing, Congar affirms that it is theologically imprecise to speak of the Church as sinful.

> The Church so understood is made up of men who are all sinners, who moreover have their limitations and bear a heavy load of physical, sociological, historical, ethical and other factors that condition them. It is in them and through them that the

> institution itself takes on the concrete historical forms which define the form it originally received from our Lord and his Apostles. This collective entity is human and, by its very nature, limited and fallible. One cannot, however, attribute sins, in the strict and ethical sense of the word, to a collective subject, for in this sense, sins can have as subject only individual persons.[8]

Hence, Congar, holds that it is necessary to distinguish between sin, in the proper use of the word, and faults, shortcomings, and mediocrities--all of which can rightfully be applied to the Church.[9] And these latter are of immense significance. They are, in Congar's opinion, the source of those aspects of the Church which alienate so many from the Gospel. The structure of the Church, which is holy, has become identified with a facade that often alienates modern man, even ones who find the Gospel to be the source of meaning and authenticity. This facade has been received and accepted from past generations--as a type of habit. Sometimes those in positions of special responsibility even confuse the particular facade that has been accepted with the structure.

The fact that sin cannot be attributed to the Church but only shortcomings does not mean that there is no connection between the two. The sins of omission and commission by individuals contribute to the general condition of the Church. For example, individual members of the hierarchy are certainly not exempt from sin. And their sins, as men of special responsibility and authority, affect the life of the Church in any given period. When multiplied, individual acts of unfaithfulness can create situations which occasion the judgment of God.[10]

> ...The responsible leaders--theologians, bishops and popes--commit sins in their sphere as responsible leaders, sins which inasmuch as the leaders personify and represent the whole community are considered without distinction as sins of the community. These same leaders and, to a lesser but nevertheless real extent, all the faithful, thus bear responsibility for bringing about certain situations in which the desire for improvement is not strong enough, in which mission, preaching, and doctrine are neglected, in which worldly postures of power and prestige are so highly developed, and shortcomings are so widely tolerated in worship, in the behaviour of the clergy, etc., that all this rouses the wrath of God and sometimes even the wrath of man.[11]

And the evidence of history is unequivocal in its witness to the errors, abuses, and failures on the part of those in positions of leadership. There has been instance after instance of simony, of nepotism, of abuse of power, of using temporal power to try to gain spiritual ends, of using spiritual means to try to gain temporal ends, of more regard for the world than for the Gospel. These kinds of actions can have a strong negative effect on every dimension of the Church's life and yet they cannot invalidate the Church's structure. For example, none of these can prevent the validity and the efficaciousness of the sacraments--although they can influence the way in which the sacraments are subjectively received or appropriated--because the sacraments are basically the action of God.[12]

It is clear, however, Congar is not speaking of two different and separate Churches--one issuing from the gifts of God and the other formed by men. There is only one Church. And the one Church is both structure and life, which brings us back to Congar's position that the Church is simultaneously holy and full of sin, infallible and fallible, perfect and subject to innumerable historical imperfections.

> There is in this concrete body a divine and a human part. The divine part is truly interior to the Church and constitutes the totality of its formal principles; but the human part, with its human weakness is also a part of the interior of the Church. Thus the Church itself is without weakness and without sins in its internal principle, but the human subject matter which enters into its concrete structure is weak and introduces sin....[13]

This is why the answer to the question of whether or not the Church is sinful must be answered dialectically.

In his article "Ecumenical Experience and Conversion: A Personal Testimony," Congar responds to W. Nicholls and other Protestants who have suggested that repentance is at the heart of the life of the people of God and that it should therefore be at the heart of the ecumenical movement.[14] Congar states that he can accept this position with certain qualifications. First of all, he would rather speak of conversion than repentance, because he feels that the latter can easily produce a type of "romanticism" which does not seriously consider the necessity of an actual shift in one's attitudes and convictions. Also, as already has been indicated, he is of the opinion that one must be precise in speaking about the Church, in contrast to individual members, repenting. It is clear that the structure of the Church cannot repent. But it is equally clear that the life-pole of the Church must always be reformed.

> We have ... marked out a whole field--[illegible] coextensive with the human history of the Church--which is the field of the Church's frailties, frailties for which all churchmen are responsible, and to some extent all the faithful, for which the Church in the comcrete and historic meaning of the word must indeed do penance.[15]

Congar goes on to suggest that the Roman Catholic Church has often done better in practice on this matter than one would assume from certain of its statements.

> The Catholic Church does not care much to speak about reform or to hear others speak about it, but it never ceases reforming itself, trying to conform more closely to the pattern of its Master and of his Apostles. In the end of the day, the differences between Catholic and Protestants are, in this field, at the same time, less than is thought, and very great. Less, in that Catholic theology attributes infallibility and irreformability only to that which is in her of God (of Christ): in this respect, the Reformers do not speak differently. Very great, in that Catholic tradition admits the existence of a divine institution for salvation established in the world since the baptism of Jesus and since Pentecost as a public and visible institution, whereas Protestant theology seems to us to recognize as the sole agent of the work of salvation in individual persons, only Christ himself, as Lord most glorious, through his Holy Spirit. Catholic theology, on the other hand, acknowledges the visible Church as having truly received, through the foundation, the promise and the grace of the Lord, the attributes of indefectibility, and also the classic attributes of unity, sanctity,

> apostolicity, catholicity; whereas, if I am not mistaken, Protestant thought restricts these attributes either to Christ, or to the transcendent and invisible reality that we would rather call the Communion of Saints.[16]

Thus with regard to the crucial issue of whether the Church is sinful and must as a result be constantly reformed, Congar gives an affirmative, although qualified, answer. The gifts of God's grace to the Church (the structure-pole) can never become so marred by sin or disobedience that the transforming power of Christ and the Holy Spirit no longer is present. But there is at the same time no zone of the Church which sin cannot invade. The members of the hierarchy are not just sinful in their private lives. Their sin influences their "public" acts. This means that reform never involves an alteration of the structure, but it does mean a renewal of particular historical forms of the structure and of the people who comprise the life-pole.

It is out of this context that Congar distinguishes between three levels of reform. The first type is the reform of abuses. It involves a reaffirmation of a system of discipline or a return to the rigorous practice of Church law. At this level, no fundamental resourcement is involved. The standards and forms are not being put into question, but are being re-applied. For example, a monastic order might decide that it had moved away from its original intent and return to a more strict adherence of its rule. Reform at this level is the guarding of the purity of a particular theological, liturgical, or clerical form or style. And Congar readily acknowledges that the reform of abuses is often needed. But at the same time he also holds that it can produce an anachronistic point of view, for, at times, the particular form that is being upheld is precisely what needs to be transcended. Or to put it in a different way, although there are times in the history of the Church when all is needed is the eradication of certain abuses, there are other periods which require not the purification of a certain outmoded form but a more radical return to the purity of the sources of the Christian faith.[17]

The second level of reform is a much more profound one. It involves a change or transformation of the forms of the Church. Instead of just returning to the correct observance of a past form of Church life, it includes a resourcement--a renewal by a return to the Source through the basic sources of the Church. At the same time, it involves a certain openness to the contemporary world. It recognizes that the Church exists in history and that it must consequently take into account new modes of thought and changing patterns in culture and society.

Congar explicitly disagrees with certain "conservative" (non-historical, closed) viewpoints within Catholicism which in responding to the threat of Modernism turned inward and have insisted primarily upon moral and personal reform, and have rejected any change in institutional forms. He acknowledges that in the face of the threatening opposition from Modernism that wanted to revolutionize the structure of the Church, such a reaction is historically understandable. But this past threat is not sufficient reason to continue this type of defensive response. There can be no sharp and permanent lines drawn between the Church and the world. The Church must always be alert to the present possibilities of history.

> It is necessary to lay aside the false ideal of a pure spirituality that is realized in its purity independent of all concrete conditioning.... It is right that the Gospel of the Fatherhood of God implies the brotherhood of man which has destroyed slavery and which, one day, will abolish the proletarian condition and war; but in the order of realization and even of the full understanding of the demands of the Gospel, it is necessary that certain forms be overcome in order that the principle be accomplished.[19]

If the Church is to be faithful to its calling to serve its universal Lord--Lord of both the Church and the world--it must be sensitive to basic changes that are occurring in the world and be alert to the authentic questions that men are asking. This means that the Church must have an historical concept of itself. Even if its source is trans-historical, it must interpret the Gospel in theological and institutional forms that communicate the Gospel to the present which God has given to the Church in order that it might be His witness.[20]

The third level of reform is in Congar's view a reformation of the structure of the Church. The best example of this type of reform is the Protestant Reformation. And it is inauthentic reform because it is really a revolution, seeking to overthrow the very structure of the Church. Part of dogma, some of the sacraments, and the hierarchical constitution of the Church were all rejected. When this type of action occurs, it is no longer a matter of reforming but of denying part of the very means which God has given in order that the Church might truly be the Church. For Congar, the forms of the Church may be renewed and to a certain degree changed, but the structure itself is permanent.[21]

Congar explicates in considerable detail two temptations which are always confronting the Church and which often prevent the Church from fulfilling its calling to be reformed more closely into the form of Christ. These two temptations, which, in fact, are always being actualized, are pharisaism and upholding the status quo.

The danger of pharisaism is that the Church will forget that the Christian faith is fundamentally an encounter between God and man, and will distort this fact by eclipsing the human dimension or response. It is "the temptation to forget that religion has its truth only in man and instead to become absorbed in exterior matters (de s'arreter a des choses); it is the temptation to allow observances or means to turn into ends."[22] Historical forms are developed to serve and express certain goals or purposes. Fundamentally, the letter is to express the spirit. But this relationship easily gets twisted and turned around..

> History and facts show that the mediation not only takes the necessary determined historical forms, but tends to develop in an autonomous fashion and to occupy the

> whole stage. Although they are only means, there is a danger of even the best things turning concretely into ends.[23]

And once the means has assumed the role of an end, not only has the end become hidden but as time passes it becomes increasimgly more difficult to restore the proper relationship. Particular forms become more and more hardened into habit and, as Congar says, petrified in memory--in brief, the signs of rigor mortis begin to appear, instead of the Church remaining as it should, that is, always young.[24]

The most important instance of pharisaism is the condition of the Church prior to the Protestant Reformation. Congar states that Erasmus was correct in observing that the Roman Catholic Church had been invaded by the tendency to let external practices conceal their inward or spiritual meaning.[25] But, the temptation of pharisaism is always present. And there is no question that Congar felt that the contemporary Church, after the Second World War, had also given in to this temptation.

We have seen that Congar places a very strong emphasis upon defining the Church in terms of communion. And, as suggested, one of the main threats of pharisaism is that it excludes the personal dimension. When the Church becomes old--closed and unbending--it thinks that it is sufficient merely to keep repeating the external rites. It believes that it has achieved a fixed and permanent condition of perfection, and that all that is now necessary is to keep reproducing itself. This can happen in worship. It can occur in theology, as

Congar says was the case with late scholasticism. Just as there is a stultifying and depersonalizing *academism* in art, pharisaism is the analogous tendency within the Church.[26] Pharisaism happens, for instance, anytime the act of becoming a Christian is primarily a matter of birth, education, or social conformity. Thus while Kierkegaard incorrectly ignores the corporate and organic dimension of the Church, and as a result is quite onesided in his theology, he is right in stressing the solitary Christian who is constantly in the process of becoming a Christian through faith-decision. Pharisaism rejects subjectivity. It denies the personal. And this is why Congar warns so strongly against it.[27]

The second temptation and the second expression of sin which prevents the Church from authentically reforming itself is that of upholding the *status quo* (*la tentation d'agir en "Synagogue"*). This is the danger of refusing to go beyond present theological and institutional forms, which have been useful in responding to God in former situations but which have become anachronistic. It is the temptation of ignoring the eschatological goal of sacred history, of not treating history seriously, and of failing to see that tradition is always living tradition.

Congar holds that if one carefully and honestly examines the history of Christianity one is compelled to draw the conclusion that certain epochs and forms tend to exercise, by way of their former value and success, a perpetual hegemony on later generations. To a certain extent, this type of "conservatism" is normal and beneficial. For example, it is only right that the hierarchy, which is to preserve the structure of the Church, always has a tendency to distrust innovation. And Congar affirms that beside such permanent structural realities as the sacraments, dogma, and apostolic succession, there are other forms that one would not change. They impose themselves upon the believers' docility and respect. Unfortunately Congar does not elaborate precisely what forms fall within this category. Perhaps, it would be inappropriate to make any generalizations on this matter--that is, one only calls for change in that which requires change. As a general principle, he affirms: "It is necessary to reflect a long time and in an attitude of great docility on the tradition of the Church before condemning a form of life in the name of tradition...."[28] Sometimes what is considered to have become outdated has later turned out to have enduring significance.

But although Congar grants an essential role to conservatism within the Church, he also argues that the fixity of a particular form of tradition can result in an unnecessary chasm between theological and ecclesiastical expressions of the Gospel and a particular period of history. And this is, in fact, what Congar believes happened in the present age. Some Churchmen wish to maintain forms and styles which were once quite satisfactory but which are no longer adequate or relevant. They offend, to varying degrees, the modern temperment, and as a result conceal rather than communicate the

Gospel to twentieth century man. But the temptation to uphold the status quo is not any more of a new temptation than pharisaism. St. Jerome was accused of troubling the peace of the Church and disturbing the foundation of faith when he made his translation of the Bible. St. Thomas, who in more recent times has occasionally been held to be the philosopher and theologian of Roman Catholicism, was once held in disregard by the Franciscan theologians because of his innovations. The adoption of the status quo is a perennial threat.

The method for denying this temptation or at least for not letting it enter the life of the Church to the extent that it is unduly harmful is to distinguish between what is permanent or absolute and what is relative and changing.

> There are in the Church many human institutions and even essential elements which no one can alter but which have been expressed in the course of history in modalities and forms which are contingent, historical, and subject to change. Christianity is eternal, but the forms in which it has realized itself ... are related to history, conditioned by a given state of development. To wish to assimilate them, in importance and permanence, to Christianity itself would be to absolutise the relative.[29]

This means that there must be a type of double faithfulness. In order to be faithful to the Gospel, to Scripture and Tradition, one must be unfaithful to certain forms of the Church which have become established and which have taken on the appearance of eternality, although in reality they may only go back several generations.

For Congar all finite realities are characterized by a polarity between their essence and the forms in which they are realized. The essence of a "thing" is always stronger than its form. It measures the latter. At the same time, the essence attracts and inspires the form to more completely realize itself. And although Congar acknowledges that there is a difference between the natural order and the historical order, which may mean that one cannot develop an adequate philosophy of development which encompasses both areas, he does believe that this analysis of essence and form does apply to Christianity. The Church is always judged by its end (Christ as Omega), which is, of course, also its source (Christ as Alpha).

> This is why, at least in the case of Christianity, it is true to say that if it it is measured by the "truth" of the consummation to which it aspires it is also measured by its source. Thus the concrete forms in which it is realized are judged by the truth which is found at the source as well as by the truth which is found at the end.[30]

The forms of the past which have been continued into the present must be evaluated in terms of present questions and needs and by the Gospel, the source and goal.

The main features of both pharisaism and the stance of upholding the status quo are part of "integrism." As indicated in Chapter One, this position first developed as a vehement anti-Modernist movement. And Congar holds that "integrism" is still very much alive, not so much as an explicit theology but as a way or method of approaching all religious matters. "...It is primarily a mentality or an attitude, which determines a certain way of holding Catholic positions."[31] And it is an attitude that has marked all the great crises in Roman Catholicism since the French Revolution. In every case, it has been against the reform of theological and institutional forms.

"Integrism" strongly affirms the rights and methods of authority in all areas of life. It has an a priori repulsion to all notions of evolution and historical development. Because of this, it naturally distrusts all schemes of the development of doctrine, and of all theologies in which the categories of "life" or "experience" play a central role. Likewise, it has an aversion towards any theology that indicates similarities or identities between Roman Catholicism and non-Roman Catholics. "Integrism" prefers to stress the difference--to mark clearly the chasm that it sees as existing between the Roman Catholic Church and all other religious and philosophical convictions. With regards to its understanding of faith, "integrism" tends towards intellectualization, placing almost all the emphasis upon the given or objective aspect of faith. It gives little stress to the subjective side of faith. In the same vein, "integrism" has little sympathy with theological problems or questions. It is prone to demonstrate conclusions and to defend what it considers to be permanently acquired results. Generally, St. Thomas is considered to have said almost everything that it is important to say within the realm of theology--the work of St. Augustine, St. Anselm, and St. Bonaventura, not to mention a Möhler or a Newman, is automatically excluded. And finally, "integrism" does not look for what is valid in the positions of others; rather it is almost totally preoccupied with disclosing errors in the views of the "opponents."[32]

With regard to the doctrine of the Church, Congar describes the position of "integrism" as taking the following type of stance:

> In the doctrine of the Church or in its practical directions ... there is an accentuation of the authoritative and inflexible aspect; an exaggeration of the definitive character of the words coming from Rome.... Generally, the truth is not experienced as a plentitude towards which one strives in the company of other men and in the communion of the Church, but rather it is understood in a linear and schematic way--as a statement to be imitated on the one hand, and to be received wholly completed on the other. It is quick to detect heresy in those who still search, who listen to every valuable contribution, and for whom there are not only conclusions but also problems.[33]

This means that "integrism" will only accept the first type of Church reform, the reform of abuses. Because he sees all change and progress as being in fact a retrogression, the "integrist" has no sympathy with the reform of institutional forms. For him, everything is a question of morals; if individuals will be renewed, this is all that is necessary.

Does the fact that "integrism" has succumbed to the dangers of pharisaism and of upholding the status quo mean that it is heretical? Is it not just the opposite extreme of Modernism? For Congar, the answer is clearly a negative one. Although "integrism" is severely limited in its approach to the Christian faith, it is a decisively less serious threat to the Roman Catholic Church than Modernism. Modernism attacked the structure of the Church, and as a result it has been appropriately labeled a heresy. "Integrism" has sinned against the life-pole of the Church. And although Congar certainly does not want to minimize the damage which "integrism" has caused within the Roman Catholic Church, he also is convinced that it has not thrown into question or challenged the esse (structure-pole) of the Church.[34] The solution to authentic reform is a middle way, one which properly honors both the structure-pole and the life-pole of the Church. Congar explicates four characteristics of authentic reform which allow for a transformation of theological and ecclesiastical forms without the Church giving in to the temptations of p pharisaism or upholding the status quo, or adopting the path of schism or heresy.

The first condition of true reform is to give priority to pastoral concerns. In the discussion of Congar's view of tradition it was observed that for him intellectual concerns and theology are always secondary to the living reality of the Christian faith. The former are necessary but they are dependent upon the latter. It is within this framework that one must affirm the primacy of the pastoral realm, or to put it another way, the priority of the community of the love of God.

As he looks at the history of both authentic and inauthentic reforms, Congar is convinced that schisms and heresy have frequently been caused by giving the primary emphasis to theological matters. "The prophetic perception must certainly have a development, but it is not necessary that it have its development in an independent manner; it must have its development *in the Church*, in the body and life of the concrete Church."[35] Participation in the Body of Christ and in its reality of love precludes isolating oneself from it solely for theological reasons.

This does not mean that theology is to take place within an ecclesiological strait-jacket. Theology must be submissive to the reality of revelation that is expressed in the structure of the Church. It must serve that which is the given. But within this limitation, it is to go about its work with great freedom. Of course, it is not always easy to distinguish the dividing line between the two. Congar is quite aware of this. "It is necessary not to change the Church and it is necessary to change something within it. It is not necessary to create *another Church* and it is necessary to create, to a certain degree, a different Church."[36] One must differentiate between changing certain forms and changing the *esse* of the Church. Congar believes that it is precisely the commitment to pastoral concerns that helps the theologian to make this choice properly.

He argues that one can find a distinct difference on this point between reform in the thought of St. Bernard and

St. Francis and in the reform-become-revolution in the theology of Luther. The former two attempted to transform the Church from within the Church. Luther finally ended up by attacking the structure of the Church itself. By allowing theology to become master, Luther became willing not to perfect the Church, but to start anew. In theologically rejecting the ecclesiological forms of his day, Luther made the mistake of believing that he had to overthrow the whole Church. He was right in indicating the inadequacies of many of the contemporary forms of the Church. He was wrong in not seeing that at a deeper level the true Church was capable of being reformed.[37]

Or if one looks at the writings of men like Renan, Döllinger, and Loisy, one finds a decided predominance of intellectual over pastoral concerns. In fact, Congar believes that there is almost always a difference in theological tone and focus between those theologians who have written from within the context of pastoral responsibilities and those who have been "professional" theologians. Those who have had ecclesiastical duties are more interested in the concerns and needs of men in their daily concrete situation. Origen and Tertullian theologize differently than Irenaeus and Cyprian. And to jump to contemporary times the young Barth received a major theological shock from fulfilling his parish responsibilities of preaching every Sunday.[38] Thus, in summary, for Congar the true reformer is primarily concerned about the concrete life of the Church.[39]

The second condition for reform without schism or heresy is the need to remain within the communion of the whole Church. Here Congar relies quite closely upon the position of Möhler, who in turn was influenced by the concept of truth in Absolute Idealism. The truth is found in the whole, with the consequence that falsehood is a limited position that claims to reflect a wider perspective than it in fact does. Because of his finitude, each person can grasp only a certain aspect of the truth. And this is why it is so important to theologize within the total community of truth (the Church).

> That which one cannot know by himself, one can know through others; when one remains in the communion of the whole body, one profits from corrections, from completions, from the plentitude that it brings to us ... simply by virtue of the "influence" of the community.[40]

The great temptation of the prophetic reformer, who is on fire with his particular apprehension of the truth, is that of a onesided position--or what Congar sometimes terms "unitraditionalism." By remaining within the community of faith the unilateral tendencies of the reformer are corrected by other perspectives. It is when the reformer is determined to go his own way that schism and heresy arise.

To understand fully what it means for the reformer to remain within the whole communion of the Church it is necessary to consider both the structure-pole and the life-pole of the Church, and their inter-relationships. From the evidence of Church history, it is clear that the hierarchy has seldom taken the initiative in changing and renewing the institutional forms of the Church--although there are exceptions, such as Innocent III. In general, new initiatives come not from the center but from the periphery.

As in all institutions, specialization occurs within the Church. And since the people of God is simultaneously linked with the past and progressing toward the future, some aspects of the Church tend to be concerned with continuity while others are more concerned with change. The center, the hierarchy, has the function of maintaining unity and continuity. "They exercise above all the charism which assures apostolicity. They are in the Body the criteria of life for the one and apostolic Church."[41] The center is charged with the responsibility of guarding the structure of the Church. Congar quotes Cardinal Suhard's statement that "authority sanctions more often than it invents."

It is for this reason that reformers have seldom come from Rome. They have come from the periphery. For instance, none of the great Orders of the Church has been initiated by Rome. And it is because of this that in the late Middle Ages the word "reform" was almost synonymous with the word "council." The latter term implied the need of the center to enter into dialogue with the periphery. This desire reflected the crucial ecclesiological affirmation that the Church is a communion. Thus if the center is concerned with preserving the structure, the periphery specializes in interpreting the Gospel in history, which means the changing and alteration of certain forms of the Church that have been inherited from the past. The Holy Spirit works--as we saw in Chapter Two--through both poles. And for the Church to fulfill its mission, both poles must receive their proper consideration.

> The concrete life of the Church is realized in a perpetual exchange between the _Urbs_ and the _Orbis_. Without ceasing, the _Orbis_ brings to the _Urbs_ its aspirations, its problems, its appeals; without ceasing the _Urbs_ is concerned about the whole universe.... The _Orbis_ brings to the _Urbs_ the voices of the world, multiple and impetuous, and sometimes violent and discordant; and the _Urbs_ reproduces the apostolic word of unity: its grace is to harmonize the voices of the parts with the whole, not only across space (Catholicity-unity) but across time (apostolicity-unity), and of doing that in an immense Body in which all the parts are active....[42]

With his interest in doing justice to every aspect of the reality of the Church, Congar underlines in his analysis of reform, the importance of the _Orbis_ or life-pole. For instance, he suggests that while there were good historical reasons for increased centralization of the Church during the Middle Ages--particularly because it permitted the Church a certain independence.in relationship to secular powers--it also created the danger of the _Urbs_ becoming isolated. Even such apparently mundane procedures as the recruitment of personnel for the Roman Curia can have wide consequences. If men are chosen who have a conservative and paternalistic approach, the result is that the _Urbs_ of the Church becomes closed to the pressing requests, problems, and experiments of the _Orbis_. What is needed is men who represent the great variety of persons and movements within the Church.[43] Ways must be devised for the *Orbis* to be heard.

But again it needs to be emphasized that the two poles, structure and life, are not equal. Even if the center is deaf to the voices that come from the frontier, the *esse* of the Church is not in any way threatened. It is a matter of loss in plentitude, in fullness. On the other hand, if the periphery becomes disconnected from the *Urbs*, it is like a body without a skeleton which gives it shape. However, Congar is quite clear in saying that one must not act as if it is *just* a loss of plentitude. It is a serious loss. Sometimes it has even been a tragic loss. True reform cannot occur outside the one true Church. But the hierarchy of the one true Church also has the responsibility of seeing to it that authentic reform can and does occur within the Church.

The third condition for true reform is the quality of patience, or respect for delays in the enactment of renewal. One aspect of this is the kind of common sense that says one should not expect a significant reform to take place overnight. It also suggests a type of humility and flexibility of spirit, along with the insight on the part of the reformer that he does not possess all the virtue or all the truth. But most important of all, patience involves an eschatological perspective. The patient reformer realizes that the plan and movement of sacred history has not yet been completed. The natural and proper tendency of the reformer is always to lean to the future which God will provide. There is a sense in which all reform is an anticipation of the eschatological kingdom, of its justice and purity. But there is still an important difference between impatient and patient reformers.

Congar contrasts the careers of Lammenais and Lacordaire on this point. The former was a prophetic figure who did not have the patience to stay within the Church. The latter, with just as deep an understanding as Lammenais that a new world had been created by the French Revolution, did have this quality of patience--and, consequently, he was able to change the religious map of his century.[44] He combined a deep orthodoxy with a frank acceptance of the new situation. For instance, Lacordaire was convinced that it was no longer possible to support the Church through authority and power but only through appealing to the free convictions of man. While Lammenais became completely disenchanted with the concrete condition of the Church, Lacordaire continued to work from within.[45]

The impatient reformer is likely to oversimplify issues. He often has the tendency to treat highly complex matters as if there were a single simple answer or solution. One ironic consequence of this is that the reformer through his urgent striving for truth is likely to mix the truth that he has discerned with falsehood. Wishing to hasten renewal, he can end up by retarding it. And just from a practical standpoint, the patient reformer is the one who is more effective.[46]

Yet Congar does not only speak of the patience of the reformer. He speaks just as fervently of the responsibility of the hierarchy to listen and to take appropriate action. The periphery must acknowledge that the hierarchy has the right, duty, and gift (from the Holy Spirit) to determine what should be the law of the Church. On the other hand, the hierarchy must be open to the voice of the reformers, since the Holy Spirit is also active in them.

> One cannot require of reformers that they not be too impatient more than one asks the guardians of tradition to not be too patient; to be sensitive to the pressures of demands which may explode one day because they have been compromised too long....[47]

The Protestant Reformation is, in Congar's view, a good illustration of the consequences of an impatient reformer (Luther) and a too patient hierarchy. To prevent this type of tragic event, the life-pole of the Church must develop according to the structure-pole. But the structure-pole must be attentive to the urgent requests that are made to it. Otherwise it assumes the grave responsibility of depriving the Church of all creativity. It risks driving the reformers outside the Church.

The fourth condition for reform without schism or heresy is resourcement. Only by returning to the sources of the Christian faith can the Church authentically develop in contrast to just adopting novelties from the world. True reform always grows out of the Gospel. It is always in continuity with the Source of the Church. To insure this, reform must, be a return to Scripture, to the Church Fathers, to the liturgy, and to the theological and spiritual leaders in the history of the Church.

Resourcement is not, however, to be confused with antiquarianism. It is not an uncritical mimicking of the past. To the contrary, a return to the sources helps the reformer to distinguish accurately between those forms which are of enduring value and those which are of a transitory nature. Scholarly work is thus necessary for valid reform. But it is not sufficient in itself. Resourcement involves a recentering of lives upon Christ--and for this reason, Congar indicates the importance of biblical and patristic renewal. A reform that is intellectually valid but which does not achieve the conversion of man is far from adequate. True reform means re-forming of life.

> ...A liturgical renewal presents an exceptionally favorable foundation or framework for a reform movement. Not only does it lend itself well to guarding the primacy of the pastoral, not only does it promote Christological recentering in the return to the original sources, but it is, by its nature, theologically very secure, assuring the renewal of life in deference to the hierarchical, sacramental, and dogmatic structure.[48]

Congar's denial of an automatic adoption of novel features from the world into the Church does not mean, of course, that there is not a valid adoption of certain aspects of the contemporary situation. As one would assume, he is not advocating the position that the Roman Catholic Church took in its attack upon "modernity" in the Syllabus of Errors in 1867. A good example of this approach is the last position that is denounced in the document: "The Roman Pontiff can and should reconcile and adapt himself to progress, liberalism, and the modern civilization."[49]

For Congar, this statement must be seen in relation to its times. What was being challenged, and that which the _Syllabus of Errors_ was supporting, was the structure of the Church. But this position is not to be seen as a permanent guideline for the Church's relationship to the changing forces and movements of history. Along with a return to the sources of the Christian faith, there must be an examination of the contemporary situation--in light of the most profound expressions of the Gospel. A genuine process of judging and assimilation must occur.

> Reconciling the Church and a certain aspect of the modern world cannot be done by simply introducing into the Church ideas as they presently exist; this presupposes work in depth, by which the permanent principles of Catholicism influences a new development by assimilating it, after having decanted it, and in case of need, purifying it, that is, the valuable "properties" of this modern world.[50]

Such a complicated and complex process cannot occur in the mind and life of a single individual or even a small group. True development takes time. Congar suggests that it takes at least a generation. And it is the work of the whole Church--even though it will begin with the work of a prophetic individual. It must develop within the entire communion, laity and clergy, and in the entire heritage of the Church. For this to occur, _resourcement_ on the part of many is necessary.

Each of these four conditions is to aid reformers and reform movements within the Church to lead the Church in being more fully centered in Christ. For Congar, all true reform is always concerned in enabling the Church to conform more completely to its Lord. The particular reform movement which has been most consistently at the heart of Congar's own ecclesiological endeavors has been ecumenism. It is to this subject that we now turn.

Notes to Chapter VI

[1] Congar, Sainte Église, pp. 150-54.

[2] Congar, A Gospel Priesthood, p. 226.

[3] Congar, Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église, p. 20.

[4] W. Nicholls, Ecumenism and Catholicity (London: SCM Press, 1952), p. 18.

[5] Congar, "Ecumenical Experience and Conversion: A Personal Testimony," p. 83.

[6] Congar, Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église, p. 106.

[7] Ibid., p. 112.

[8] Congar, "Ecumenical Experience and Conversion: A Personal Testimony," p. 85.

[9] Congar, Sainte Église, pp. 145-46.

[10] Ibid., pp. 146-47.

[11] Congar, "Ecumenical Experience and Conversion: A Personal Testimony," p. 85.

[12] Congar, Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église, p. 115.

[13] Ibid., p. 128.

[14] Nicholls, Ecumenism and Catholicity, pp. 18-19.

[15] Congar, "Ecumenical Experience and Conversion: A Personal Testimony," p. 85.

[16] Ibid., p. 86.

[17] Congar, Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église, p. 188.

[18] Ibid., pp. 189-90.

[19] Ibid., pp. 191-92.

[20] Congar, Sainte Église, pp. 153-54.

[21] Congar, Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église, p. 191.

[22] Ibid., p. 153.

[23] Congar, "Institutionalized Religion," p. 135.

[24] Congar, *Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église*, p. 155.

[25] *Ibid*., p. 160.

[26] *Ibid*., p. 163.

[27] Congar, "Institutionalized Religion," p. 143.

[28] Congar, *Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église*, p. pp. 174-75.

[29] *Ibid*., pp. 177-78.

[30] *Ibid*., p. 598.

[31] *Ibid*., p. 605.

[32] *Ibid*., pp. 617-18.

[33] *Ibid*., p. 618.

[34] *Ibid*., p. 621.

[35] *Ibid*., p. 249.

[36] *Ibid*., p. 251.

[37] *Ibid*., pp. 251-53.

[38] *Ibid*., p. 257.

[39] *Ibid*., p. 263.

[40] *Ibid*., p. 265.

[41] *Ibid*., p. 276.

[42] *Ibid*., p. 287.

[43] *Ibid*., pp. 303-305.

[44] Congar, *Les voies du Dieu vivant*, p. 317.

[45] *Ibid*., p. 332. Cf. *Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église*, pp. 565-69. One can find several significant parallels between Lacordaire and Congar. In fact, it is probably fair to say that the former has at least in some ways served as a model for the latter--certainly much more than the Modernists, as some of the critics of the "new theologians" have suggested. Like Lacordaire, Congar has manifest a strong patience in the face of considerable adversity. Both men express more concern for mission than for dogmatic theology

as such. Congar follows in Lacordaire's footsteps in seeing the great need of the Church to find relevant forms through which it can more adequately minister to a radically changed world. And Congar continues Lacordaire's concern that the authority of the Church needs to be based on the Gospel and not on secular concepts of authority.

[46] Congar, Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église, p. 318.

[47] Ibid., p. 332.

[48] Ibid., p. 338.

[49] Denzinger, The Sources of Catholic Dogma, p. 442.

[50] Congar, Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église, p. 346.

CHAPTER VII

UNA SANCTA: ROMAN CATHOLICISM AND THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

As Congar looks at the rise of ecumenism he suggests that one can point to several causes. First, modern man has a new sense of human solidarity. He is haunted not only by the question of his own individual destiny but also by the question of the destiny of all mankind. As a result of this new situation, a Roman Catholic is impelled to ask how "the others" relate to the Roman Catholic Church.

> In many places, every Catholic knows people who are Protestant, perhaps a Communist or two, maybe a Jew, and certainly some who "don't care," either because of indifference or because they are positively opposed to religion. These people are his fellows, sharing a common destiny with him, and he, or she, cannot but ask how they stand with regard to his religion, his faith, and that salvation in which he believes. The Communism pervading some countries, which has imposed some of its problems on us, is in its own way underlying the question: on the one hand by the atmosphere of human solidarity and ever-growing "worldwideness"; on the other, by consciousness of a tremendous historical continuity which forbids us to ignore the solidarity of generation with generation and century with century.[1]

Amidst the divisions and great disruptive forces in the modern world, there are also strong unitive forces at work. The ecumenical movement is one of the manifestations of the latter.

A second cause of the ecumenical movement is that twentieth century man has a new type of historical perspective. He no longer sees the events of the schism between Constantinople and Rome or the Protestant Reformation as they were seen by their contemporaries, or the following generations of interpreters. The Roman Catholic now sees that the Church was in urgent need of reform and that many of Luther's initial concerns were valid ones. The Protestant sees that Luther had many truly catholic concerns. Both see the numerous non-theological factors that were contributing to the eventual division. And both see the tragic consequences of this event as they have continued to manifest themselves down through the centuries.[2]

But while both of these are causes of the ecumenical movement for Congar, they are not the most significant one. The basic reason for it is found in the unfolding of God's plan in sacred history.

> ...Ecumenism is an enterprise of faith, a chapter of sacred history, and not a human enterprise demanding competent, well-organized people, and all of the rest of it. It is an enterprise similar to the apostolate, of the order of the history salvation, which supposes that God comes to awaken consciences and lead them where he wills. Under these conditions, unity, if it is eventually given us, will not be the victory of one confession, not even for the Catholic Church--although as a Catholic, I like to think that unity will take place in the apostolic Body, in the apostolic continuity of the Church. No, unity will not be the confessional victory of a Church which would be content to assimilate others without changing anything

> in herself--those others who might finally have integrated with her after orbiting about her for so long. It will be a victory for Jesus Christ; a victory of the plentitude of the Gospel over Churches which have recognized this plentitude by deepening their own faith.[3]

The whole thrust of sacred history is towards unity, and this is why ecumenism with its concern for concrete and visible unity is part of sacred history. The ecumenical movement is not a human invention but an agent of the will of God.

It is precisely along these lines that Congar interprets Christ's priestly prayer in the seventeenth chapter of the Gospel of John.

> Finally, His supreme prayer, in which all the prayers of His life were summed up, was for the disciples, for those whom the Father had given Him: that the Father watch over them, that they be one, that they have in them the fullness of joy, that they be consecrated in truth. Jesus did not pray only for them, but for all those who, by their words, would believe in Him, so that all might be one (Jn.17). This unity is one which is drawn from the unity of the divine Persons and is an image of theirs. Jesus did not give all the implications in detail, but it is quite certain these were, and still are, the object of His intercession, for He does not cease to make intercession for us. The field is unbounded, covering the entire history of salvation.[4]

It is in the context of sacred history, as stated in this prayer, that Congar believes that Christians must ask themselves whether they can be comfortable with or resigned to the divisions that are such a visible and major part of Christianity. Only God can heal the wounds and unite the present divisions. But since sacred history involves not only God's initiative but also man's response, God will not do it apart from man's carrying out the divine plan.

> Something, therefore, we must do, if only to prepare ourselves to be God's instruments in the day when He is pleased to have mercy on us. If we cannot carry through a divine work, we yet can hamper it. It is not certain that what we undertake will be blessed by God and endured by Him with efficacy and power, but it is certain, at all events, that if we do nothing, nothing will be done; if we change nothing, nothing will be changed. And we are faced with the question which Bessarion put to the members of the Greek Church: "What answer shall we give to God when he comes to ask why we have separated from our brethren; to Him who to unite us and bring us into one fold came down from heaven, was incarnate and was crucified?"[5]

Because ecumenism is a part of the movement of sacred history, Congar indicates that the way to Church unity is through a deepening and broadening of the Christian faith among the various communions. Dialogue, resourcement, and spiritual ecumenism are all necessary. Any Christian communion that is becoming more profoundly motivated by the Gospel will be simultaneously moving to overcome the present divisiveness because the establishment of reconciliation and unity is at the very heart of God's design in history. But before we turn to these major ways of "promoting" ecumenism, we must examine Congar's position on several issues that are central to any Roman Catholic approach to the ecumenical movement. First, we will consider his interpretation of the nature of the unity and catholicity of the Church in relation to ecumenism. Then we will look at his treatment of three subjects that are closely connected with the first issue: the meaning of the formula, "outside of the Church there is no salvation"; the question of whether and in what sense it is possible to speak of Protestant demominations as participating in the reality of the Roman Catholic Church; and the meaning and value of heresy.

In the discussion of the marks of the Church, it was indicated that while all four marks must be viewed in a dynamic framework that, relatively speaking, a dynamic thrust is more characteristic of catholicity than of unity. For Congar, Roman Catholic theology cannot be faithful to the nature of the Church unless it unequivocally affirms that unity is to be found within the Roman Catholic Church. Unity is not something to be discovered or established. It has been given by Christ--even though it must be seen as having a missionary impetus. On the other hand, Catholicity, although it also has been established by Christ, depends more upon the historical responses and contributions of man. The pleroma of Christ is completed onlytthrough the course of sacred history, and it contains all that is valid and authentic in man's achievements. And because the Church exists between Christ as Alpha and Christ as Omega, it must always be stretching beyond its present state of existence and striving for a more adequate and perfect response to the will of God. The Roman Catholic Church must be faithful and open to those aspects of the truth that have not yet been realized--even though they may be implicitly present--within its own communion.

It is within this eschatological context that the role and importance of the ecumenical movement must be seen. Through such means as dialogue, prayer, and *resourcement*, Roman Catholicism and other communions are advancing toward a still undertermined point of convergence--one which is clearly situated beyond any present position.

> In the perspective of such a development, it can be admitted that the Church of eventual reunion will be in a position which has not yet been reached and lies before both us and our separated brethren. All that we believe is that this point will lie along the line of development of the Church whose apostolicity dates from the day of Pentecost. At what precise state in its development reunion will take place, to what degree of purification it will correspond, we do not know. We simply know that it cannot take place *in any other ecclesiastical body* than the Catholic Church, because it is in this Church which is the apostolic Church. We can freely admit, and for those who really understand the question there are weighty reasons for doing so, that if reunion does take place one day it will be *with a Church which differs in some ways* from the present condition of the Catholic Church, different because it will have developed and been purified and reformed in more than one respect through living contact with its deepest sources, particularly with holy Scripture. It is not, and cannot be, a question of any substantial change in the Church, but of her attaining a state in the concrete manifestations of her vitality at which the principles of her basic tradition shine out more clearly and in a more Catholic manner, irradiating culture and mentalities of more diverse kinds.[6]

Several points in this statement need to be particularly stressed. The structure-pole of the Catholic Church is not in any sense in doubt. Any future ecumenical developments towards concrete union in which the Roman Catholic Church is involved will have to have this structure--although it may be expressed in somewhat different historical forms. But if this must be affirmed, it must be in conjunction with the acknowledgement that any future union of Protestant denominations with Roman Catholicism cannot be considered simply along the lines of a return to Rome. Ecumenism involves the reform and purification of the Roman Catholic Church as well as of the Protestant Churches. The Roman Catholic approach to ecumenism is not that the Church has already been completely constructed and exists in pure splendour (the ecclesiology of Vatican I). Rather, it assumes that further development must and will take place. Involved in this position is the assumption that Protestantism will have its own positive contributions to make to any eventual union. The process of giving is not unilateral. Although the Roman Catholic Church cannot envision a unity that has any other basis than itself, it does see the possibility of significant change as it moves towards a more complete catholicity.

> The Holy Spirit, then leads us and guides us into "all truth." It seems to me that here we come to the point which corresponds most closely to the specific work of ecumenism which, by its very nature, is a movement towards accomplishment and plentitude. It envisages a unity of integration, not one of impoverishment; it seeks to reassemble and gather together. It demands from those of us who wish to serve it a great effort to broaden our minds and to develop our loyalty and fidelity in depth, the purpose being to surmount a complex of conventional ideas w

> which, far from being in the true Catholic "tradition," represent its stagnation and attenuation. Yet, painful as such an effort is, it soon reaps its reward in the expansion of our own catholicity and in countless discoveries and enrichments. Beyond the purely confessional and somewhat narrow meaning of the fine name "catholic," we shall discover a truer sense of what we are and learn to become all that name implies, to make it a reality rather than a mere label and ourselves become more "catholic," more "universal." In doing this we shall rediscover the part of our common heritage which our separated brethren retained in parting from us and which they have perceived, developed and lived with greater intensity than we have. We shall not add truths, peculiar to them and lacking to us, to our own. We all believe in truth and *we desire to be led "into all truth."* For our separated brethren, this means substantial rediscoveries and, for ourselves, rediscovery, in greater depth and breadth, of *our own* tradition.[7]

If this type of stance is still not wholly satisfactory to Protestantism, it is nonetheless a great distance from triumphant annexation or return to Rome.

The question of the relationship between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism in Congar's theology can be further sharpened by looking at his interpretation of the formula "outside of the Church there is no salvation." This statement had had a longer and varied history within Catholicism.[8] For our present purposes, there is no need to follow in detail the winding course of its interpretations. We will only look at several of the major shifts. For Cyprian and Origen, this statement was meant to apply in a literal and exclusive sense to all people who lived after the coming of Jesus. The original intent of the formula was to affirm that there is no salvation except through Christ. And theologians such as Cyprian and Origen did not see any way to honor this principle other than by excluding from salvation those who either knew nothing about Jesus Christ or who explicitly denied the means that Christ had instituted to carry his salvation to the world, namely, the Church.[9] Congar points out that it was through historical experience that the Church learned that this view, although it was correct in affirming that there is no salvation except through Christ, had definite limitations. The great geographical discoveries of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries increased immensely the boundaries of man's mind. Through their missionary experience, the Jesuits, in particular, brought this new knowledge to bear upon the life and thinking of the Church. And by the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, Roman Catholicism was faced with a new situation within the "old world" itself. Wide areas of the population became ignorant of Christianity. The idea of tolerance towards other convictions became a widely held position. The rights of a person's individual conscience in matters of belief became respected.[10] And as a result of these developments, a shift occurred in Roman Catholic interpretation of "Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus." This was first expressed by Pius IX. He strongly attacked "indifferentism." But at the same time he affirmed the possibility of salvation for those outside of the Roman Catholic Church who were "in good faith."[11]

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Congar says that in contemporary Catholic thought this formula has come to mean that outside of the plan of God there is no salvation.

This plan has entered the historical order in Jesus Christ, and is continued, in some sense, by his Body, that is, the Church.

> ...It is no longer a question of applying the formula to any concrete person whatever, but of stating objectively that the Church of Christ is commissioned and qualified to carry salvation, brought by Jesus Christ, to all men; and that she alone, as Christ's Church, is so commissioned and qualified. So the formula is no longer to be regarded as answering the question "Who will be saved?" but as answering the question "What is it that is commissioned to discharge the ministry of salvation?"[12]

Because of the past and inadequate interpretations of "outside of the Church there is no salvation" Congar prefers to replace it with the "Church is the universal sacrament of salvation." This latter formula includes both the affirmation that the Church is the only institution that has been created and charged by God to bring to mankind the salvation which has been made available by Jesus Christ and that the Church has received from its Lord all of the necessary authority, power, and spiritual gifts to accomplish this mission. These are the valid implications of Cyprian's statement. But in addition the phrase "the Church is the universal sacrament of salvation" does not suggest, as does the older one, that no individual is saved outside of the Roman Catholic Church.[13]

But one is still left with the question of how and in what sense a Protestant belongs to the one true Church. In approaching this issue, Congar makes two basic assertions. First, if an individual is in any degree united to Christ he necessarily belongs--in some manner--to the Church. Secondly, although the Church is a living organism, one can speak of it as having a certain number of essential elements, its structure-pole.

> Together they form the one soul of the one Church, because they are an ordered fullness, living and organic, rather than a collection of diverse elements. Nevertheless, they are multiple, because of the complexity of that humanity which they have to reach and permeate and vivify into a people and a Church. Although, as a whole, these principles are so ordered as to complete and explain each other, they can to some extent be realized in separation; not indeed in the Church as such, which comprises them in inalienable completeness, but in us, the members of the Church who may be unequally inspired by her soul and live by only a part of her energies.[14]

This approach opens the way for holding that there is a graduation of membership within the Church. And this in turn allows for a way of relating individual Protestants to the Roman Catholic Church.

Congar illustrates this point by describing the differences between a Protestant and a Roman Catholic who receive baptism, are nurtured, and mature as Christians within their respective communions. Through baptism, the Roman Catholic receives the principle of a new life, and is incorporated into the Body of Christ. Within the fellowship of the

Church he finds the complete and necessary means of grace through which Christ continues his redemptive work in him.

> The baptized child, then, lives in the Church, receiving all the support and illumination which are to be found in the great Catholic fellowship which, in the Communion of Saints, stretches beyond the bounds of the visible world. Through it he receives not only the teachings of the faith, in harmony with the secret interior knowledge which has been given him by the gift of faith, but, in the exercise of his Christian life, he benefits by the support and guidance afforded by the hierarchy in whom is perpetuated, at least, in part, the apostolic *charisma*. While retaining a large measure of initiative and spontaneity his practical life develops within an ordered Catholic whole, regulated as to its broad outline by a larger wisdom and prudence than his own, thus freeing him from a limited and exclusive outlook, and enabling him to achieve a balanced judgement and life in veritable Catholic communion, first with God and then with his fellow-men. In his conformity with the rhythm of a social unit where all is devised for the increase of charity and for bringing souls under the influence of charity and for bringing souls under the influence of the Holy Spirit, he finds, besides atability and encouragement, a fullness of forgiveness and fellowship to which a purely individual Christian experience could never attain. Such is the life of the saints, who alone are in the very fullest sense of the word members of the Church.[15]

The Protestant child is also incorporated into Christ and into the true Church. But he is nurtured within an impoverished communion. He does not experience or have the benefit of the full richness of the means that Christ has given the Church.

> ...Our dissident in good faith is never going to find in his sect or Church the sum total of those principles of life in Christ which are also the actualizing and unifying principles of the Church. Nevertheless, in

> so far as he does discover these principles he is, by virtue of them, a member of the Church, that is by his baptismal character through grace and supernatural charity and sacramental graces (so far as sacraments exist in his communion); though not by an explicit profession of the true faith, a full sacramental life, or the inward inspiration of Catholic communion in faith and love, which, regulated by the Catholic hierarchy, is the ultimate seal of unity.[16]

The individual Protestant cannot be near the top of the scale of the gradation of membership, but as long as he is "in good faith" he is nonetheless a member.

This leads to the related issue of whether one can go the further step of saying that a Protestant denomination belongs to or participates in the reality of the Una Ecclesia. As already indicated, Congar affirms that Protestant communions have elements of the one true Church. By this he means that they have preserved within them certain principles that are a part of the structure of the one Church. We have seen that baptism is valid, and this is a fact of far-reaching significance. However Protestant denominations have no other valid sacraments. With regards to the Word of God, they have the Bible, but they do not have the necessary guidance of the Church's magisterium. Besides these minimum, though important elements, the various Protestant communions have developed within their own traditions many worth-while values.

> If schisms have endured, if Lutheranism, for example, can show four hundred years of existence and fifty millions of adherents, if other schisms have equally lasted and grown and have produced many remarkable lives consecrated to God, this must be due not to what they deny and reject, but to what they affirm and assert. When we try to understand why thousands of truly religious souls have

> a deep and inward attachment to the erroneous forms of Christianity they were born in and why they have a deep and inward repugnance to the Catholic Church, we find that they are attached to certain values which they regard as essential to Christianity, and as lost or distorted in the Catholic Church, such things as Christian liberty, the primacy of interior faith over outward practice, the sense of mystery and of the free initiative of God, nay even genuine loyalty and true evangelical simplicity of mind. Quite certainly they are mistaken, but just as certainly this is what they think and feel. In any case this is the meaning of their adhesion to their own form of Christianity, and of the psychological impossibility it would be for them to enter the Church: they could not give up certain positive values, which, save for certain qualifications, are genuinely Christian. Thus each of the great schisms which become great Christian communities represents, in its positive aspect, certain genuine values, even if it is tragically astray in those aspects in which it is negative, exclusive and peculiar to itself.[17]

Here we have the important implication that the Church transcends in some degree all ecclesiastical institutions, including the Roman Catholic Church. Or to put it in the context of our earlier discussion, the Church is still moving to its eschatological goal, Christ as Omega. The structure of the Roman Catholic Church will be contained in any "united" Church. But there are values which have been developed outside of it which will contribute to and enrich the Roman Catholic Church.

In the next chapter, we will see how the important aspects of Congar's position on the relationship between Protestant communions and the Roman Catholic Church have parallels in Vatican II's "The Constitution on the Church." To get the full impact of the pioneering quality of Congar's thought on this significant subject it is necessary to remember that he already had begun to chart his course in some detail in 1937 when he published Divided Christendom.

Our final investigation of the way in which Congar interprets the relationship between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism is to look at his treatment of heresy. It is, in a sense, the opposite of unity, and as a result it will be helpful to look at his analysis of this subject.

Heresy involves the holding of false doctrine. But by itself, the fact that the position a person holds is wrong is not sufficient for him to commit the sin of heresy. It is necessary that the elements of pertinacitas, stubbornness, and contumacia, obstinacy, be present. The heretic pursues his viewpoint, even though he finds himself to be in contradiction to the Church and its tradition. In the final analysis, it is the substitution of a human position or construction for the revelation of God.[18]

Congar distinguishes between what he terms ancient heresies and heresies of the renewal or reform type. Ancient heresies were essentially dogmatic in nature. They were concerned with the very basis of the Christian faith. Arianism, Montanism, Pelagianism, and Berenger's eucharistic theology all fall into this category. But beginning with the popular heresies of the twelfth century, a change occurred. Such groups as the Franciscan Spirituals, the Waldensians, the Lollards, and the Hussites were criticizing a particular historical state of the Church--a state which they felt reflected more of Constantine than of the apostles.[19] Initially, the same was true of the Protestant Reformation. Luther believed that he must reclaim what was fundamentally catholic tradition against the present condition of the Church.[20] Another difference between the two types of heresies is that the ancient form produced, according to Congar, no new values in Christianity, while the later type, and particularly the Protestant Reformation, has made a number of contributions. As examples of values that have developed within Protestantism, Congar mentions a serious attitude before the Word of God, intense biblical study, an ethic of personal seriousness and loyalty, consciousness of the sovereignty of God and the action of grace, an interest in missions, and a concept of the Church as a communion. These are all positive values and "belong" to the catholicity of the Church.[21]

How then are heresies to be interpreted with regard to their relations to the Roman Catholic Church and to the plan of sacred history. Traditionally, they have been understood in two ways, which are not mutually exclusive. Sometimes, heresies have been seen as a means of testing the people of God. Congar suggests that this interpretation is already present in St. Paul: "For, in the first place, when you assemble as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you; and I partly believe it, for there must be factions among you inorder that those who are genuine among you may be recognized (I Cor. 11:18-19)." The other way heresies have been understood is as movements that have led to a more thorough and profound examination of Scripture and consequently to progress or development in Christian doctrine.[22]

Congar finds both of these views to be inadequate. The main reason for this is that they both presuppose a view of history that sees two different processes developing in a parallel manner, with one becoming increasingly light and the other increasingly dark. Such views do not adequately take into account the concrete historical reality of heresies which, as has been indicated, are not purely negative. They have definite values, although these are undoubtedly mixed with falsehood. Congar suggests that only an eschatological interpretation of heresy does justice to their reality. When they are interpreted within this framework they are seen as "preparations." The Church Fathers spoke of certain pagan values as providing a preparation for the coming of Christ. In an analogous manner, Congar holds that heresies are preparations for the second coming of Christ (Christ as Omega). The Roman Catholic Church is not alone in working for this event. All truths will be assumed into the Kingdom.[23]

This analysis is particualrly applicable to the Roman Catholic Church's understanding of its relationship to Protestantism and the ecumenical movement. Congar is convinced that within Protestant ecumenism there is a _votum_ (a desire for) _Ecclesiae_ and _votum_ _Catholicitatis_, which exonerates it from the quality of pertinacity. This desire for catholicity inherent in the ecumenical movement reveals the presence of a positive element oriented towards the future.[24] And this attitude means that any eventual reunion is something quite different from a return of errant Christians. From an eschatological viewpoint, ecumenism is an enterprise which involves time, and it should be remembered that all significant reform, for Congar, "takes time." One cannot guess the length--thus far the process has been coextensive with the history of the Church. Eschatologically speaking, ecumenism is an enterprise that involves the double effort of moving towards both the purity and plentitude of Christ as Omega. It involves a radical type of repentance and renewal--not only on the part of Protestantism but also of Roman Catholicism. The latter is not the only one who must be "convinced" by an ecumenical desire. "The Church (Roman Catholic Church) must, in order to be faithful to its law of catholicity and to its vocation of preparing for, indeed of initiating the Kingdom, desire to search for ecumenicity."[25] Such a purpose demands dialogue, resourcement, and a type of spiritual conversion which brings about a depth and openness of spirit to the will of God (spiritual ecumenism). It is to these subjects that we now turn.

In tracing the history of the association between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism, Congar holds that prior to the contemporary situation this relationship has gone through four basic periods and stances: polemical controversy; irenic controversy; symbolics; and Konfessionskunde. Polemic controversy characterized the "encounter" between Roman Catholics and Protestants during the sixteenth and early part of the seventeenth century. The theology of this period was oriented to defeating the other side. Every attack had to have a counter-attack. Works were refuted sentence by sentence. Immense value was given to authority and to reasoning. No historical, sociological, or psychological factors were taken into account. In general, all arguments were "atomistic" in character. No one--on either side--attempted to see or understand the whole of the other person's position. Each individual point was examined in isolation and "refuted." No one ever admitted that there was any falsehood or guilt on his own side, nor even questioned his own position. The result was an inevitable hardening of opposition to each other.[26]

This approach finally gave way to the irenic method, largely because it was discovered that polemical theology did not accomplish any significant results. Other factors also contributed to the change. For example, the Thirty Years' War led many men to a position of religious tolerance. The resulting irenic method, best represented by Bossuet, began to make the effort to understand the total position of the other side. And equally important, the attempt was made to distinguish between pivotal and peripheral issues.[27]

The irenic approach was in turn followed by symbolics (a comparative study of creeds and confessions), which was a more scientific and academic form of exposition. A careful study began to be made of the various creeds and confessions. On the Catholic side the person who most profoundly used this approach was, in Congar's opinion, Johann Adam Möhler. This method continued Bossuet's thrust of considering particular theological issues within their total theological context.

But more objectivity was usually present, partly because it was basically an academic matter rather than propaganda for inter-confessional warfare.[28] Yet this academic orientation was also, in Congar's mind, the cause of its major weakness.

> ...The outlook of the symbolists was too narrow in one respect because, in considering the Protestant positions only from the viewpoint of their official texts, they committed the sin of academicism, even though their approach was honest and valid. A method may be excellent in the matter of studying texts, but it cannot be adequate for an approach to the being of another in its fullness. A text can never exhaust the position of a spirit. When it comes to a whole religious communion, this spiritual content overflows the intellectual plane and impregnates its life and its prayer--not only its private prayer, but also its liturgical prayer. And then it embodies itself in the collective behaviour of a community that has its own particular genius and its own feeling, in the sense of einfühlung, that is, the penetration of an object from within.[29]

Konfessionskünde (whatever acquaints us with the life of a denomination), the fourth approach that developed, grew out of an attempt to correct this academic abstractness. It sets out to understand the total concrete life of a denomination or communion--its worship, its ethics, its "customs," its ecclesiastical institutions. It considers the total geographical, economical, political, social, and cultural context, that is, all the non-theological factors that are so dominant and determinative in every communion's life.[30]

But a new reality has appeared in history: ecumenism. The approaches of the symbolists and Konfessionskünde still have their place, but now within a new setting. There are many characteristics of this new situation. But certainly one of the best terms for describing it is to say that it is the era of dialogue.[31] And for Congar, dialogue is also one of the fundamental methods by which the ecumenical movement can move forward.

What is ecumenical dialogue for Congar? One way of defining it is to contrast it with polemics. We have seen that the latter is predominantly concerned with defeating the opponent. But in dialogue truth and not victory is the goal. This means that a major aspect of dialogue is to accept the other in such a way as to acknowledge that he may have some significant contribution to make. Dialogue implies mutuality and communion. This does not mean that one gives up one's own apprehension of the truth. But it does imply that there may be truth on the other side--and that truth is communicated in encounter rather than by polemical "liquidation." It means that both sides, Protestant and Roman Catholic, see the other as subjects rather than objects.

> Since, however, other people really are _subjects_, just as we ourselves are, they react. They do not wish to be mere _objects_, not even objects of solicitude. We encounter resistance, or even retaliation from them, which distresses us. Our mutual relationship suffers from a radical falsity which is experienced as bias, inflexible incompatibility and painful misunderstandings. The only escape from this deadlock lies in our conversion to the acceptance of others as _subjects_ with their own views of the world, their own ideas, joys, sorrows and plans, all of which are as individual as our own. This presupposes, at least

> provisionally, the admission that others may be right, or at least that they may have reasons for thinking differently from us which are valid from certain points of view. Quite simply, this amounts to conceding the other the right to be different, that is, to be himself.[32]

This principle of dialogue has, in Congar's view, tremendous ecumenical implications--ones which have already begun to be explored but whose full possibilities still remain ahead.

Two of the points mentioned above needed to be developed in more detail. First, dialogue must be seen as a search for the full truth. "Integrism" is monological in character. As its very name implies, it claims to be whole or complete. For Congar, the adoption of dialogue does not lead to epistemological scepticism. It is simply the acknowledgement that one does not yet have the full or complete truth. And on the other hand, it is the awareness that the other person (or confession) also seeks the truth.

> This has always been the method of great minds moved by an unqualified devotion to truth. Even in their most determined adversaries, they sought everywhere for evidence of a zeal for truth in which they could share and at the same time for the grounds, often arising from faulty reasoning, wrong categories, excessive haste or bias, which had caused the other to be deflected from his own aim to arrive at truth. St. Thomas Aquinas excelled in this method. Contrary to the belief of some who are insufficiently acquainted with him, throughout his lefe he engaged in dialogue with great minds holding views different from his own and sometimes well outside the confines of orthodoxy....[33]

On the side of Roman Catholicism, dialogue means acceptance of this zeal for truth in others--and beyond the zeal, the truth that others have apprehended. A good example of this is the type of radical re-evaluation of Luther that has been going on within Roman Catholicism in the work of such men as Joseph Lortz, Karl Adam, and Congar himself, in which Luther's theology is seen as having a number of positive features instead of simply being the result of pathological megalomania which had been the judgment of such earlier influential scholars as Heinrich Denifle.[34]

Dialogue means that both "participants" ask the other: "Have you taken seriously this or that aspect of the truth?" It is by this type of mutual questioning that progress is made in knowing the truth. This is not always an easy process--certainly easier to write about than to do. Congar himself speaks of having received ecumenical "shocks," by which he means, in part, questions or affirmations that have come from Protestants which have forced him to re-examine his own position--to come to a deeper understanding of a particular theological issue and to express his position in a more adequate manner.[35]

The other point that needs to be stressed is that dialogue is to be in no way identified with indifferentism. Dialogue does not imply that the Roman Catholic Church will give up its claim that it is the true Church. Dialogue involves tolerance, not indifferentism. The latter maintains that all positions are of equal validity. The former is "the good and far-seeing attitude of a person who is so enamoured of truth that he refuses to disregard any element of it, wherever it may be found and however mixed with indubitable error."[36] By entering into ecumenical dialogue, Roman Catholicism can become more truly itself. It will become aware of values that it does not presently express, that is, dialogue can help it become more explicitly catholic. The eschatological criterion again plays a major role. The Church is always judged by the truth of the consummation to which it aspires (Christ as Omega). And dialogue implies an openness to the plenitude of truth, and at the same time a rejection of any position that confuses a particular historical state of the Church with its ultimate goal.

> Far from enfeebling the convictions of those who engage in it, ecumenical dialogue strengthens and deepens them. Nothing more has been demanded of them than would be required for any real progress within the framework of their own Church and their own conviction: to outstrip a purely sociological type of religious attitude and to abstain from identifying the corrollaries of historic forms with the absolute of God's gift.[37]

And this is one of the major points where dialogue converges with resourcement and spiritual ecumenism. The horizontal movement of dialogue leads the participants to a deeper understanding and realization of their vertical relationship with God.

> Far from being a game for dilettanti, like a drawing room conversation in which no one is committed to anything, the dialogue of which we are speaking is the confrontation

> of another person with someone who has convictions to which he is genuinely committed: reference to the 'Absolute' is essential to it and is what gives it life.[38]

Ecumenical dialogue leads to resourcement prayer and spiritual ecumenism and thus to the Source of faith, who is the true bestower of unity--and by this very process Christians more adequately respond to the ecumenical plan of sacred history.

The importance of resourcement for Congar has already been indicated in several different contexts. We saw that this threefold movement of reinvestigating Scripture, the Church Fathers, and the roots of the liturgy has played a major part in the so-called "New Theology" in France. We have also observed how resourcement plays a key role in Church reform. Since ecumenism is seen by Congar as a reform movement for Roman Catholicism, it is hardly surprising that he considers it to have a major function in the ecumenical movement.

In the context of ecumenism, resourcement has to be seen as having a double movement. The first consists of the Church deepening and broadening its knowledge of tradition. It means going back behind limited and one-sided views of tradition to a fuller and more nearly complete understanding. Through biblical, patristic, and liturgical renewal, the Church increases its awareness of its heritage so that it, the Church, can more responsibly fulfill its mission in the present. The first movement directly leads to the second: a return to the sources means a return to the Source. And if the ecumenical movement is grounded in the will and purpose of God, then every return to the Source of faith is necessarily going to be advantageous to the reconciliation of the divisions that have so long divided Christian from Christian. By looking more closely at each of these movements, the ecumenical importance of resourcement will become more explicit.

The return to the sources frees one from different types of theological and ecclesiological provincialism. This provincialism can take the form of seeing no value in the various Protestant traditions, of forgetting that Roman Catholicism has adopted many different forms in the course of its history, or of failing to realize that the Church's present shape and self-understanding has been partly forced upon it by the events of history (such as we saw to be the case with Roman Catholic ecclesiology). Resourcement assists the Church in enlarging its provincialism and moving towards a cosmopolitanism. It helps the Church leave a small historical perspective and achieve a larger one, which includes experiences of periods other than the ones closest to the present. With regard to ecumenicity, a return to the source also is an act of going back to that part of the past which Protestantism and Roman Catholicism hold in common, and which has at least in part remained essential and formative for all Christians.

> We can stubbornly cling to the letter of the positions of our own Church and try to justify them at all costs; or we can

> revitalize the present positions of our Church in contact with the great sources which are common to all of us. Divergences will remain, but they will be differences rather than oppositions. We shall remain faithful to our own Church; our loyalty will be even greater and stronger than before. But it will be in a spirit that has reached a higher understanding of things, far above the petty rivalries of letter against letter and justification against justification.[39]

A good illustration of this is the biblical renewal that has occurred in the last decade both within and between Protestism and Roman Catholicism. Of course, as Congar suggested in the above quotation, Protestantism and Roman Catholicism can return to the same source--in this case Scripture--and differ as to their interpretation. And this is obviously what often happens. As a generalization, Protestants are most at home in Paul's letters to the Romans and to the Galatians, while Catholics tend to stress such works as Ephesians. Yet, in spite of divergences of emphasis and interpretation, Congar still affirms that the Bible is a book of reconciliation for Christians. The reason for this is that he believes that Scripture is basically not pointed to constituting Protestants or Roman Catholics but Christians.

This claim leads us to the second point of resourcement, because one cannot discuss such matters as the forming of Christian men apart from the fact that the various sources of the Christian faith are of value only because of the fact that they point to and express the Source, Jesus Christ. "Beyond the streams which run between the revelation of Jesus

Christ and ourselves, we must find our way back to the true source to which Holy Scripture bears witness."[41] And of course the same can be said about patristic and liturgical renewal. Resourcement is always involved with re-centering upon Christ. This is why we have seen that any significant reform within the Church must always be prepared for and accompanied by a return to the sources of the Christian faith. It is the process by which the Church judges itself by the Gospel and **re-forms** itself--as nearly as possible--in the form of Christ. Since divisions between Christians usually have a strong element of pride and arrogance connected with them, resourcement is necessary for the reconciliation of the oppositions.

An important indication of how these two aspects or movements of resourcement can be utilized in a concrete and positive way in ecumenical discussion and work is the manner in which Congar develops a hierarchy of values within the Church. This is a process by which he holds that one can state that some parts of Roman Catholic tradition are essential for the Church while other parts are less crucial or even not necessary. Certainly such an approach is one of the presuppositions for any significant success in the ecumenical movement in general and certainly between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. Robert McAfee Brown has stated that one of the obstacles in Protestant and Roman Catholic ecumenical discussion has been the assumption on the part of the former that the latter holds all truths to be of the same level of importance.[42] The conclusion of Pius XII's bull on the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary expresses this point of view--at least, from a Protestant perspective. Here Pius XII is speaking of the newly promulgated dogma about Mary. "Therefore, if anyone, which may God forbid, should dare either to deny this, or voluntarily call into doubt what has been defined by Us, he should realize that he has cut himself off entirely from the divine and Catholic truth."[43] In contrast to this type of approach, Congar has indicated in a number of different contexts that there is a hierarchy of values within the tradition of the Church. We have already seen that he holds that there is a ranking of the monuments of tradition. In a similar manner he speaks of the first four ecumenical councils as having a place of priority amongst all of the councils, and the Council of Nicea as having privileged place among these four. This canon of the four councils prevailed until the Council of Trent, after which it no longer played a major role in Catholic theology.[44] But Congar suggests that because these Councils dealt with the essential matters of the Church's faith, such as doctrines of the Trinity and the nature of Christ, that they should be given a higher position than the later councils, although this in no way denies the validity of the later ones. But perhaps the most important area with regards to its ecumenical implications in which Congar has applied this principle of a hierarchy of truths is that of the sacraments.

Congar holds that the position that baptism and the eucharist are more important than the other five sacraments has strong support in the theology of such men as Ignatius of Antioch, Irenaeus, and Augustine. With regards to the witness of Scripture, Christ had a more direct and explicit role in the institution of baptism and the eucharist than of the other sacraments.

> The Lord himself determined matter and form, and, essentially, the rite and usage also. Without administering them himself strictly speaking, he directly sanctified the elements, either by his baptism ... or by sharing the Passover meal with the apostles and inserting into that meal the new sign of bread and wine.[45]

These two sacraments are also more closely related to the salvation that Christ made possible for man. Although all the sacraments are linked with the death and resurrection of Christ, baptism and the eucharist are more strictly related because by their very structure they are efficacious signs of his Passover.[46] This is quite evident when one looks at the sacraments from the point of view of their effect. Baptism is fundamental in the very constitution of the people of God. And the eucharist is basic in "creating and expressing the unity and communion of Christians in Christ Jesus."[47] In contrast, the other sacraments are related to specific circumstances in man's life. "The other sacraments sanctify and christianize man in a special situation: sin, illness, marriage, spiritual service, but baptism (confirmation) and the eucharist constitute them as

Christian persons pure and simple. They are basic."[48]

With regard to the ecumenical potentialities of "grading" the sacraments, Congar states that this method should not be taken by Protestants to be a denial of the validity of the other sacraments. Nonetheless, for Congar, the fact that the tradition of the undivided Church points not only to the use and validity of seven sacraments but also to the view that there are two major sacraments means that once the latter affirmation is accepted ecumenical dialogue on this subject should be more fruitful. One can make the same observation about the potentialities of the entire process of a hierarchy of values or truths.

For Congar, the heart of ecumenism is spiritual ecumenism. What matters in the final analysis is to be formed in and by Christ. It is not sufficient to deal with the questions of division and unity on purely theological and historical levels. These approaches are necessary. They are not sufficient.

> All this endeavour must not be only intellectual and cerebral. It must be pursued in a religious atmosphere. We approach our brothers, and we approach these subjects too, in different ways when we come to them as scholars or as Christians, by which I mean men of religion. We can pass through the door of ecumenism only on our knees.[49]

This means that at the center of the ecumenical movement is a type of spiritual approach that is characterized by repentance, conversion, and prayer.

All of the Christian life is a life of repentance and conversion. Such a radical turning is not an event that happens only once. Crucial decisions are made time and time again. With regards to ecumenism, this means that the division between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism did not just happen at various points in the past. They are perpetuated in structure and in spirit in the present. In this sense, The Protestant Reformation is happening now. "...Every time we behave in such a way that the rupture between the East and the West, or the split of the Reformation, becomes humanly and historically almost inevitable, we become coresponsible for them."[50] But the positive side of this is that whenever Christians move in the direction of crossing the barriers and healimg the wounds, they are participating in the making-present of the reconciliation of Christ. The "process" of transition from participation in uniting instead of dividing is one of repentance and conversion.

> Ecumenism seeks also a reform within ourselves, for we are full of aggressiveness, clanishness and arrogance, of distrust and rivalry. We must be converted by detachment from all this and from ourselves, and acceptance of a humble submissiveness to what the Lord expects of us. ...Ecumenism is an effort to rediscover a unity amongst Christians in keeping at once with the unity of its beginning in the Upper Room of the Last Supper and of Pentecost, and with that of its eschatological culmination. It seeks to, in the light of its origins and of eschatology, to anticipate the judgment that Christ will pass on the historical record of what has gone between.[51]

And this radical change in direction involves not only the individual's life but also the life of the Church. In the previous chapter we observed how all members, both high and low, can mar and distort the face of the Church. They cannot destroy its structure. But they can influence its life-pole, which is of considerable ecumenical significance. "...The face which the Catholic Church presents to the world determines to a large degree the chances of reunion of all the Christian churches."[52] Repentance and conversion is essential in allowing irrelevant forms to be discarded and new ones to be shaped which will permit the true Church to shine through the facing that has too often hidden rather than manifested its Lord to the world. Repentance and conversion are an essential part of the ecumenical movement because they always lead to Christ and to the unity that he has established and gives.

If spiritual ecumenism is at the heart of ecumenism in general for Congar, then prayer is at the heart of spiritual ecumenism. The reason for this is that in the final analysis prayer is the desire for and loving adhesion to the will of God. "All prayer is communion in the mystery and will of God."[53] And since the ecumenical movement is a part of sacred history, prayer is essential if the Roman Catholic Church is to respond to its calling--and, of course, the same applies to Protestantism. This stress on prayer has nothing to do with fatalism or quietism. Prayer is an openness to the will of God, to co-operating in the divine plan.[54] To say "our Father" is to involve oneself in the very core of the destiny of man and of all of creation.

Prayer changes the one who prays. And this is why it is the essential part of man's spiritual life and thus why it is of extreme importance for the ecumenical movement. And if others are involved in our prayer, either because we are praying for them or with them, then our relationship with them is changed and transformed.[55] Prayer establishes communion. It replaces distrust with trust. Ecumenically, it is the beginning step in a communion that leads to communion in the eucharist.[56] In discussing the relation between prayer and the ecumenical movement, Congar states:

> If St. John Chrysostom was able to write, "The man who prays has his hand on the rudder of the world," how much more must this be true of the prayer "that they may be one," which, in the spirit and words of John 17, rests on the prayer of Jesus himself?[57]

Through prayer the Christian more closely lives in Christ, and Christ in the believer: hence the prayer of the Christian becomes the prayer of Christ. His desire for unity becomes the Christian's desire.

It is because of the central importance of prayer in the process of uniting divided Christians that Congar has been such a strong and fervant advocate of the Universal Week of Prayer for Unity, whose chief founder was Abbé Paul Couturier.[58] Couturier's formula for ecumenical prayer was: The unity that God wills, through whatever means he wishes. Charles Boyer has criticized this position.

He argues that prayer based on such a position is too vague and that it tends to minimize Roman Catholic belief.

He advocates a kind of prayer that is confessionally more specific.[59] Fundamentally, Congar is of the opinion that this criticism is not a very telling one, because to pray in the manner that Couturier advocates is simply to place oneself in God's hands. This obviously does not in any way mean that one must renounce one's belief. It only indicates that one is opening oneself to the will of God. One is acknowledging God to be God.[60] Boyer's type of position has other limitation for Congar. It does not take into account the need for Church reform and the constant conversion of the heart on the part of Roman Catholics themselves. In addition, it is too quick to judge "the other." In this context, Congar quotes Gabriel Marcel's comment that "I only know in a certain way what God thinks of the Reformation."[61] The other shortcoming is that Boyer's view confuses irenic apologetics with ecumenism. The latter tries to find am "amiable" way of converting "the others" to Roman Catholicism. Ecumenism begins from the present situation in which there exists, in spite of divisions, a certain unity that is rooted in the divine will. Ecumenism is then the movement from this somewhat hidden and imperfect communion to a more perfect one. It involves dialogue and resourcement. But it also involves repentance, conversion, and prayer. Spiritual ecumenism is the acknowledgement that the future is in the hands of God. Or once again to put it in the framework in which we began our analysis of Congar's doctrine of the Church, for him, the reality of the Church, including the ecumenical movement, must be understood within the context of sacred history.

Notes to Chapter VII

[1] Congar, The Wide World, My Parish, p. 6.

[2] Congar, Sainte Église, p. 132.

[3] Congar, Ecumenism and the Future of the Church, pp. 117-18.

[4] Congar, Jesus Christ, pp. 95-96.

[5] Congar, Divided Christendom, p. 2.

[6] Congar, Dialogue Between Christians, pp. 95-96.

[7] Ibid., pp. 104-105.

[8] For a brief history of "Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus" see Congar's article on this subject in Sainte Église, pp. 417-32; Cf. Küng, The Church, pp. 313-19.

[9] Congar, The Wide World, My Parish, p. 95.

[10] Ibid., p. 97.

[11] Pius IX writes: "For it must be held that by faith that outside the Apostolic Roman Church, no one can be saved; that this is the only ark of salvation; that he who shall not have entered therein will perish in the flood; but, on the other hand, it is necessary to hold for certain that they who labor in ignorance of the true religion, if this ignorance is invincible, are not stained by any guilt in this matter in the eyes of God. Now, in truth, who would arrogate so much to himself as to mark the limits of such an ignorance, because of the nature and variety of peoples, regions, innate dispositions, and of so many other things? For, in truth, when released from these corporeal chains 'we shall see God as He is' (I John 3:2), we shall understand perfectly by how close and beautiful a bond divine mercy and justice are united; but, as long as we are on earth, weighed down by this mortal mass which blunts the soul, let us hold most firmly that, in accordance with Catholic teaching, there is 'one God, one faith, one baptism' (Eph. 4:5); it is unlawful to proceed further in inquiry." (Denzinger, The Sources of Catholic Dogma, p. 416.)

[12] Congar, The Wide World, My Parish, p. 98.

[13] Congar, "L'Eglise, sacrament universel du salut," p. 354.

[14] Congar, Divided Christendom, p. 227.

[15] Ibid., pp. 229-30.

[16] Ibid., p. 234.

[17] Ibid., p. 40.

[18] Yves Congar, O.P., "Les ruptures du l'Unite," Istina (1964), p. 142.

[19] Congar, Dialogue Between Christians, pp. 149-50.

[20] Congar, "Les ruptures de l'Unite," p. 171.

[21] Ibid., p. 172.

[22] Ibid., p. 166.

[23] Ibid., p. 174-77.

[24] Ibid., p. 173.

[25] Ibid., p. 177.

[26] Congar, Ecumenism and the Future of the Church, pp. 17-18.

[27] Congar, Dialogue Between Christians, p. 141.

[28] Ibid., p. 143.

[29] Congar, Ecumenism and the Future of the Church, pp. 24-25.

[30] Ibid., pp. 25-26.

[31] Congar movingly describes the influence of Pope John XXIII on this new situation as follows: "The Catholic Church, which has long participated in this dialogue unofficially, has now entered into it formally with John XXIII, Cardinal Bea and the Secretariat for Christian Unity. The profound novelty of the situation and the extraordinary change of atmosphere, not only in the Catholic Church, but in the whole of Christendom, or even, one might say, in the whole world, is due to the radiance of the evangelical simplicity and humility of John XXIII. It is difficult to speak of him without emotion, particularly when one thinks of his last five days of agony, endured in the sight of the whole world, from which he occasionally rallied to pray for unity.

The day following his death, four broadcasters attempted to sum up his influence. The opening remarks of one of them, Pere Chenu, was as follows: 'There seem to be a common denominator in both the thought and actions of John XXIII, namely a sense of dialogue in the fullest and richest meaning of the term: the recognition of the other as another, to love him as he is, and not as someone to be conquered, to accept the fact that he is different from oneself, and not to trespass on the integrity of his conscience and his inner quest, or allow motives of reserve to take precedence over trust. This means, then, a departure, not through weakness but through insight, from the domineering attitude the Church has not always succeeded in avoiding, the attitude of the rich and powerful which consciously tends to subdue, rather than to serve the other. It means abstention from withdrawal into _objective_ truth, as into one's own peculiar preserve, while demanding from the other unconditional surrender. It means the recognition and appraisal of the ground where shared truth can claim allegiance from us both without disguising disagreements. Such a communion is a very different thing from tactic or apologetic skill, and from that arises its ascendency, one might almost say its seduction.'

M. Claude Terrien, the announcer on Europe I, added: 'Instead of initiating a dialogue, Pius XII appealed to a form of mysticism. John XXIII did not make an appeal, he went towards others. That seemed to be the decisive feature: this recognition of the other as a partner in dialogue.'" (Congar, _Dialogue Between Christians_, pp. 54-55.)

[32] Congar, _Dialogue Between Christians_, p. 57.

[33] _Ibid_., p. 61.

[34] For a discussion of contemporary Roman Catholic interpretations of Luther and the Protestant Reformation see: Congar, _Dialogue Between Christians_, pp. 358-371; Per Erik Persson, "The Reformation in Recent Roman Catholic Theology," in _New Theology No. 1_, ed. by Martin E. Marty and Dean G. Peerman (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964), pp. 94-108.

[35] "Personally, through ecumenical discussion or by reading Orthodox or Protestant studies, I have become aware either of certain perceptions or of certain requirements in the realm of what is specifically Christian, for example, in things eschatological. But many of my friends or colleagues tell me they have made similar discoveries directly at the source without owing anything to ecumenism. In truth, it is hard to say that one owes nothing to it, for it exerts its influence also through promptings, by suggestion that is even conveyed indirectly and at a distance. Thus in France few priests and even comparatively few theologians have read

Barth; nevertheless it is fair to ask whether the tremendous response in our midst today to the theme of the Word of God, the kind of intense and gladdening joy that so many priests today experience in their ministry, would be what it is had there been no Barth. Ecumenism, said Dom Clement Lialine, works by shock. I myself am conscious of having profited in many fields from shocks received twenty-five years ago, when, on the points at issue, I had not even had any discussion and was pursuing my quest within the framework of the Catholic tradition alone." (Congar, "Ecumenical Experience and Conversion: A Personal Testimony," pp. 77-78)

[36] Congar, The Wide World, My Parish, p. 143.

[37] Congar, Dialogue Between Christians, p. 60.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Congar, Ecumenism and the Future of the Church, p. 51.

[40] Congar, Les voies du Dieu vivant, pp. 56-57.

[41] Congar, Ecumenism and the Future of the Church, p. 33.

[42] Brown, The Ecumenical Revolution, p. 198.

[43] Denzinger, The Sources of Catholic Dogma, p. 648.

[44] Congar, "La Primaute des quatre premiers conciles oecumeniques," in La Concile et Les Conciles, p. 100.

[45] Yves Congar, "The Notion of 'Major' or 'Principal' Sacraments," trans. by Theodore L. Westow, in The Sacraments in General, ed. by Edward Schillebeeckx, O.P. and Boniface Willems, O.P., Concilium, Vol. XXXI (New York: Paulist Press, 1968), p. 24.

[46] Ibid., p. 25.

[47] Ibid., p. 28.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Congar, Ecumenism and the Future of the Church, p. 52.

[50] Ibid., p. 147.

[51] Ibid., p. 83.

[52] Yves Congar, O.P., "The Council in the Age of Dialogue," Cross Currents, XII (1962), p. 146.

[53] Congar, Jesus Christ, p. 98.

[54] Yves Congar, "Theologie de la priere pour l'unite," Verbum Caro, XXI (1968) p. 1.

[55] Congar, Ecumenism and the Future of the Church, p. 137.

[56] Congar, "Theologie de la priere pour l'unite," p. 8.

[57] Congar, Ecumenism and the Future of the Church, p. 137.

[58] Paul Couturier (1881-1953) has had a considerable influence upon Congar. This is true even though Couturier, who was born twenty three years earlier than Congar, began what might be called his ecumenical career slightly after Congar. As we have seen, Congar became conscious of his vocation to ecumenism in 1929. Couturier's major biographer and interpreter states that Couturier did not begin his ecumenical career before his fifty second or fifth year. (Maurice Villain, L'Abbe Paul Couturier /Paris: Casterman, 1957/, p. 17.) Through encounters with Eastern Orthodox refugees at Lyons and then through a visit to the Benedictine Prior of Amy-sur-Meuse in Belgium, the home of the Monks of Unity (and its leader Dom Lambert Beauduin), Couturier became convinced that the fundamental way to unity was through prayer. His efforts to promote this conviction centered around the Octave of Prayer for Unity, observed annually from the Feast of St. Peter's Chair (January 18) to the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul (January 24). The original concept of the Octave of Prayer for Unity grew out of the joint endeavours of the Rev. Spencer Jones and the Rev. Paul James Watson, both of whom were Anglicans, although Watson later became a Roman Catholic. The idea commended itself to Pius X, who gave it papal approval in 1909. Benedict XV then made the Octave an official part of the liturgical year in 1916. "The prayers were unambiguously couched in the language of "return"--Catholics were to pray for the return to Rome of the 'other sheep' who had gone astray." (Brown, The Ecumenical Revolution, p. 326.) Couturier saw the dilemma which the Octave created for non-Roman Catholics. And it was through his influence that the prayers were changed so that all Christians might join in them without necessarily having to sacrifice their own denominational loyalties. The Week of Prayer is now, of course, sponsored by the World Council of Churches as well as by the Roman Catholic Church. Perhaps it is also worth noting that Pope John XXIII first

publicly declared his intention of calling Vatican II on the closing day of the Week of Universal Prayer for Unity. The day after he had told his intention to a group of cardinals, the following communique was issued by the Vatican: "The Holy Father does not envisage that the aim of the Council is only to procure the spiritual good of the Christian people; it is also to be an invitation to the separated communities to join in the search for unity." (Quoted in Congar, Report from Rome, Vol. I, p. 7.) In connection with Pope John XXIII, it is interesting to note that he also was influenced by Dom Lambert Beauduin, as is indicated by the following statement which he made to a group of theologians when he was still Archbishop of Venice. "The thing most needed in work for unity at the present moment is this: it is still too little spread amongst the masses, though they would nevertheless be ready to appreciate it. My old friend, a Benedictine monk of Belgium, Dom Lambert Beauduin, said when I was beginning my work of co-operation in the New East: 'A movement must be created in the West in favour of reunion with the separated Church, a movement parallel to that of the Propagation of the Faith.' I had at the moment just completed reconstituting this in the world, under the direction of the new pope, the glorious Pius XI. And I think we ought to return to the idea of Dom Lambert Beauduin." (Quoted in Geoffrey Curtis, Paul Couturier and Unity in Christ [Westminster, Maryland: J. William Eckenrode, 1964], p. 15.)

Congar states that it is to Couturier that Christians owe the whole movement of spiritual ecumenism which Congar sees as inspiring the ecumenical hope of the whole world. (Congar, Dialogue Between Christians, p. 20.) There would therefore seem to be no question that Couturier has had some influence upon Congar's thought. It is less likely that Congar influenced Couturier if one can take the former's opinion to accurately reflect the situation. He writes: "I believe that Abbé Couturier was always aware of my sympathy with his work and my affection for him but he rarely referred to men. He must have found me too dogmatic and, from his point of view, perhaps too superficial." (Ibid., p. 22.)

Without trying to suggest precisely in what ways Couturier influenced particular aspects of Congar's thought, I will suggest a number of points of similarity in their thought. I am basing my observation of Couturier on his most important essay, "Prayer and Christian Unity." This is included in Curtis, Paul Couturier and Unity in Christ. Both men see the unity of the Church as something not to be created. It has already been given by Christ and exists in his Body, the Church. Nonetheless unity must also be interpreted dynamically. That is, it must be seen that although the unity of the Church has already been constituted that it has not yet been completed. Unity continues to grow--and this is why ecumenism is so important. For this reason, the problem of Christian unity is not to be considered within the framework of "returning" but of "integration." Other communions will have their own contributions to make and these will greatly enrich the one Church. True unity does not deny but fosters diversity. Both men also take seriously the present divisions. They feel that only obedience to the will of God on the part of all communions will overcome the barriers. And this is why prayer is so important. It seeks the will of God. By doing this the various communions avoid both "triumphalism" and "indifferentism" in ecumenical relations. The only way out of the divisiveness is to pray in their own communions. Through prayer there becomes a unity of love. And only on this foundation of spiritual ecumenism can there be built any real unity. Couturier writes: "Prayer leads to charity and charity to fullness of the faith, which, conforming to its own nature, brings unity in its turn, and from this unity springs an increase of charity, whence flow forth fresh unifying lights of the faith and so forth ... therein lies the true way to understand the question and work effectively towards Christian unity. Controversy, on the other hand, shuts the door of the soul to the breath of the Holy Spirit, for it immediately produces a defensive attitude, and that results in opposition in two camps, whereas if we look first for what unites us, and not what divides us, 'a union of hearts in prayer is established and a union of minds will follow in the sphere of faith' (Letter of a Carmelite)." (Ibid., p. 349.)

[59] My comments on Boyer are based on Congar's summary of his position found in Ecumenism and the Future of the Church, pp. 118-19.

[60] Congar, "Theologie de la priere pour l'unite," p. 11.

[61] Ibid., p. 8.

CHAPTER VIII

A COMPARISON AND SOME REFLECTIONS

The purpose of this final chapter is twofold. The first part will be an analysis of the theological parallels between Congar's ecclesiology and the teachings of Vatican II. The remainder of the chapter will be concerned with giving reflections on some of the issues and questions that have been implicit or explicit in our explication of Congar's doctrine of the Church.

The subject of Vatican II is an enormous one, both historically and theologically. What will be done here is very limited in scope. The basic purpose is simply to indicate the important agreements and similarities between aspects of Congar's ecclesiology and the emphasis of the official decisions of Vatican II. No attempt will be made to say how much influence Congar's theology had upon the Council's deliberations. Only someone extremely well acquainted with the proceedings of the Council could even begin to unravel this issue, since the very nature of the Council meant that a vast variety of theological influences were present. Men like Hans Urs von Balthasar, Bernard Häring, Hans Küng, Henri de Lubac, and Karl Rahner were only some of the important progressive (reform) spokesmen--and certainly any adequate appraisal also would have to take into account the impact of such conservatives as Sebastian Tromp. I will only be concerned with pointing out how major elements in Congar's doctrine of the Church, which only a few years before the Council were highly suspect in conservative and official circles, became part of the official teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

Probably the most important document of Vatican II was the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church. For the first time in the history of Roman Catholicism, an explicit doctrine of the Church had been developed and approved by a Council. No longer was this area of theology left in the background. And it was this constitution that formed the foundation for the other fifteen documents of the Council.

The style and tone of On the Church reflect its content. If one compares it with the documents of Trent or Vatican I, one is struck immediately by the fact the former is neither defensive nor polemical in character. It is not formulated vis a vis erroneous ecclesiologies. The main thrust is positive. Its atmosphere is pastoral and ecumenical. The partisan and immobilist character of Trent and Vatican I has disappeared.[1] This positive and open quality is, of course, precisely the tone which has always been such a dominant part of Congar's own theological endeavors.

Turning to the content of On the Church, one of its most important features is its affirmation that the Church is a mystery. The document rejects those kinds of ecclesiologies that look upon the Church as being primarily a juridical, externalistic, and static reality. We have seen that Congar repeatedly has pointed to the severe limitations of this type of approach--a type, which we observed in Chapter One, has been the predominant view in Roman Catholic ecclesiology until quite recent times. Albert Outler has made the following insightful comment on the emphasis upon "mystery":

> To begin with the notion of the Church as "mystery" ... is at once to lift the discussion above the level of institutional organization and management, and to establish as the first premise of sound ecclesiology the reality of the Church's divine origin, maintenance, and destiny. The Church in history is "human, all-too human," but her true dynamic--what accounts for her continuity through history and her effective witness in the world--lies beyond human manipulation or merit. To speak of the Church as mystery is to confess God's constant sovereignty and to remind all Christians that we "belong to the Church"--the Church does not belong to us![2]

Since the Church is rooted in the divine purpose, and definition which interprets the Church primarily as an institution--for instance as a legally constituted monarchical society--is inadequate. In order to stress "the divine origin, maintanence and destiny" of the Church, Vatican II drew upon a number of biblical images: sheepfold, tract of land, edifice, our Mother, and the Body of Christ.[3] But the concept that is most completely developed is the people of God. All of Chapter II is concerned with this theme.

The development of the concept of the people of God is of the utmost significance in evaluating the accomplishments of Vatican II. In our analysis of the history of Roman Catholic ecclesiology we indicated that this concept has been kept at the periphery of "official" interpretation. With Vatican II, it moved, after much debate and controversy, from the edges, center-ward. The importance of this for the total document becomes ambiguous because in Chapter III of On the Church the view of the Church as being basically a structured society reappears.[4] But no matter how one judges the relationship between these two chapters, it would seem that the dominant intent of the Council was to move away from non-biblical and thus non-historical views of the Church. This decision, which is in basic agreement with Congar's theology of the Church, led to other important decisions.

One of the most important of these determinations is that Vatican II firmly places the reality of the Church within the context of sacred history. In On the Church, the Church is not seen as a static or non-historical reality. It is seen as having its origins in Israel, and most specifically in Jesus Christ. In the present it moves toward the Kingdom--as God's instrument of salvation.[5] The people of God is the "pilgrim Church" or "messianic people." From the perspective of the Church as the people of God, the Church is not triumphant or already-built. Just as in Congar's theology, the Church is the agent, sign, and seed of the Kingdom.

This means that On the Church holds that there is a distinct difference between the Church and the Kingdom of God. "Its goal is the kingdom of God, which has been begun by God Himself on earth, and which is to be further extended until it is brought to perfection by Him at the end of time."[6] A tension remains between the "already" and "not yet" dimensions of the Church.

A Protestant theologian must ask whether there is a sense in which the Kingdom of God stands in judgment of the Church's existence. This issue was raised with regard to Congar in Chapter Two. And in both cases, the Church, because it is rooted in God's plan by God, is seen to be basically in continuity with the Kingdom.[7] Yet if a Protestant cannot be completely happy with this formulation, it would be a mistake for him to conclude that the tension that is affirmed between the Church and the Kingdom in On the Church is not an important declaration for the Roman Catholic Church to have made. Commenting on this matter, Edward Schillebeeckx has said: "Compared with the Church's 'official' doctrine before the Council, all this is new."[8] An important consequence of this change in stance is the way in which it allows Roman Catholicism to speak of the need for Church reform. In an ecclesiology that assumes the Church is already built (Vatican I), it is, of course, impossible to speak of the need for significant renewal.

On the Church does not explicitly criticize the Church, but it does provide the basis for such analysis.

A good example of self-criticism is found in the Decree on Ecumenism. In contrast to the older position of Roman Catholicism in which all the blame for divisions among Christians was directed to Protestantism or Eastern Orthodoxy, On Ecumenism unequivocally states that the divisions are the result of action and attitudes on all sides.

> From her very beginnings there arose in this one and holy Church of God certain rifts (cf. I Cor. 11:18-19; Gal. 1:6-9; I Jn. 2:18-19), which the apostle strongly censures as damnable (cf. I Cor. 1:11ff., 11:22). But in subsequent centuries more widespread disagreements appeared and quite large Communities became separated from full communion with the Catholic Church--developments for which, at times, men of both sides were to blame.[9]

Having made this kind of admission, it is not surprising that the Council goes on, in the same document, to affirm that one of the most important aspects of ecumenism for Roman Catholicism is purely internal in nature, namely the renewal of itself. It is even stated that Christ summons the Church to a continual reformation of itself, a subject about which Congar has written so powerfully.

> Therefore, if the influence of events or of the times has led to deficiencies in conduct, in Church discipline, or even in the formulation of doctrine (which must be carefully distinguished from the deposit itself of faith), these should be appropriately rectified at the proper moment.[10]

Another emphasis that Congar has long been advocating and that has a major place in the documents of Vatican II is that the Church is all the people of God and not primarily the hierarchical priesthood. With Vatican II, Roman Catholicism embraced for the first time the concept of the priesthood of all believers. No longer is it possible to claim that in Roman Catholicism the laity is the "long arm" of the Church--as if the laity is something other than the Church. Nor is it any longer possible to say that Roman Catholicism sees the clergy and the laity in terms of two separate realities. Now they are understood in terms of one people, with a common source and goal.

One illustration of how this new emphasis upon the laity was given concrete form by Vatican II is its clear affirmation that the laity has an apostolate in and for the world. The condition of the laity can no longer be thought of in terms of passivity. Lay persons are actively involved in the threefold ministry of Christ on account of their baptism and confirmation. Just as Congar had argued, it is asserted that the laity has an essential part in the mission of the Church.

> For the Lord wishes to spread His kingdom by means of the laity also, a kingdom of truth and life, a kingdom of holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice, love, and peace. In this kingdom, creation itself will be delivered out of its slavery to corruption and into the freedom of the glory of the sons of God.... The faithful, therefore, must learn the deepest meaning and the value of all creation, and how to relate it to the praise of God. They must assist one another to live holier lives even in their daily occupations. In this way the world is permeated by the spirit of Christ, and more effectively achieves its purpose

> in justice, charity, and peace. The laity have the principal role in the universal fulfillment of this purpose.[11]

This means that the laity receives the same call to holiness as the clergy and the religious. The universality of this call erases the false distinction between a higher and a lower level of obedience to Christ, which has so often characterized Roman Catholic thinking. "In the various types and duties of life, one and the same holiness is cultivated by all who are moved by the Spirit of God, and who obey the voice of the Father, worshipping God the Father in spirit and in truth."[12]

A second example of Vatican II's development of the concept of the priesthood of all believers in line with the analysis of Congar is manifest in the _Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy_. Steps were taken to bring about increased involvement of the laity in the liturgy. The use of the vernacular in the celebration of the mass was adopted.[13] Other forms of music than Gregorian chant, which is still given "pride of place," are to be used.[14] The dominant intent of this document is to allow the laity to move from a position of observance to active participation. The laity are to take part "knowingly" and "actively." The liturgy is not the priest's business, with the laity as the audience, but the celebration of worship in which the entire people of God takes part, although there are, of course, different functions.[15]

Congar's emphasis upon both Scripture and sermon also has a prominent place in On the Sacred Liturgy. It prescribes that "there is to be more reading from holy Scripture, and it is to be more varied and suitable." Similarly, preaching is restored as an integral part of worship. It is affirmed that Christ is present in the proclaimed word as well as in the sacraments, and that preaching should be rooted in sacred history and in turn involve the "bearer" in that same history.[16]

Turning to the area of the Roman Catholic Church's relationship to the ecumenical movement, we observe that the movement away from a juridical interpretation of the reality of the Church by Vatican II allows for it to develop a different understanding of non-Roman Catholic Christians and communions. This approach, which we have seen to be a major part of Congar's ecumenical theology, allows for Roman Catholicism to acknowledge freely that there are elements of the structure of the Church outside the visible boundaries of the Roman Catholic Church. Of course it is not unusual for Roman Catholic theology to affirm that an individual who is not a "visible" member of the Roman Catholic Church may be saved. But "official" teachings had never indicated that non-Roman Catholic communions have any churchly reality. By the time the final version of On the Church was formulated and accepted, a significant development had occurred.

In the first draft, the "Mystical Body of Christ" was simply equated with the Roman Catholic Church. And the marks of the Church were to be found only within the Roman Catholic Church, which obviously meant that only it could rightly be called a Church. In the second draft this identity was still retained, although a statement was added which asserted that outside the Roman Catholic Church there are some elements of holiness and truth which are a constitutive part of the Church and which lead to Catholic unity. In the final version a further important change was made.[17]

> This Church, constituted and organized in the world as a society, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor, although many elements of sanctification of truth can be found outside of her visible structure. These elements, however, as gifts properly belonging to the Church of Christ, possess an inner dynamism toward Catholic unity.[18]

This statement is not a model of theological clarity, and it probably allows for either a conservative or a reformist interpretation. However, it does appear to reflect an important shift in Roman Catholic thought with regard to non-Roman Catholic communions--particularly when it is placed within the context of the earlier versions. It is now affirmed that the Roman Catholic Church and the Church are not identical. The latter "subsists" in the former.

Further support for this interpretation is found in On Ecumenism, which contains a clear affirmation that Christ is present outside the visible walls of the Roman Catholic Church.

> Moreover some, even very many, of the most significant elements and endowment which together go to build up and give life to the Church herself can exist outside the visible boundaries of the Catholic Church: the written word of God; the life of grace; faith, hope, and charity, along with other interior gifts of the Holy Spirit and visible elements. All of these, which come from Christ and lead back to him, belong by right to the one Church of Christ.[19]

These "elements" are able to "engender a life of grace" and to provide "access to the community of salvation." Oscar Cullmann has correctly commented that no Catholic document has ever spoken of non-Catholic Christians in the manner of On Ecumenism.[20] One can echo this observation by saying that none has ever spoken of non-Roman Catholic Churches in this way. Clearly the type of change in stance that Congar had long been advocating was officially adopted.

A further implication of this shift is that Vatican II also speaks of any eventual visible union in other terms than simply those of "return to Rome." It will be recalled that Congar holds that both Protestantism and Eastern Orthodoxy will make their own positive contributions to any such union--contributions which potentially exist in the Roman Catholic Church but which have not been actualized. A very similar position is expressed by Vatican II.

> ...Catholics must joyfully acknowledge and esteem the truly Christian endowments from our common heritage which are to be found among our separated brethren. It is right and salutary to recognize the riches of Christ and virtuous works in the lives of others who are bearing witness to Christ....

> Nor should we forget that whatever is wrought by the grace of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of our separated brethren can contribute to our own edification. Whatever is truly Christian never conflicts with the genuine interests of the faith; indeed, it can always result in a more ample realization of the very mystery of Christ and the Church.[21]

The Council was just as clear in claiming that the Roman Catholic Church reserves all the "essentials" of unity and that non-Roman Catholic Churches suffer defects because they are not in full communion with the Catholic Church. Yet this statement about "more ample realization" indicates a quite different position than the traditional one of the return of heretical Protestantism to Rome.

Another important feature of the stance of Vatican II towards the ecumenical movement, that is also a major theme in Congar's ecclesiology, is the position that there is a "hierarchy of truths."

> When comparing doctrines, they [Roman Catholic theologians] should remember that in Catholic teaching there exists an order or "hierarchy" of truths, since they vary in their relationship to the foundation of the Christian faith.[22]

This point is not elaborated. But as indicated in the previous chapter with regard to Congar, the possible implications of this position of considerable value for the ecumenical movement. The way has been open to hold, for instance, that the doctrine of the Trinity and the doctrine of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary are not of equal significance. Of course this does not mean that Vatican II made it possible to drop the latter doctrine from its official teaching. This is not the case. But the assertion that not all doctrines are equally central to the Gospel makes possible ecumenical discussion on whether there is agreement on what beliefs are central.

We have seen that Congar stresses the importance of dialogue, _resourcement_, and spiritual ecumenism as "methods" of advancing the ecumenical movement. Each of these is also explicated and accented by Vatican II. _On Ecumenism_ upholds the importance of a deeper knowledge of the "separated brethren." It advocates the need on the part of Roman Catholics, when they are properly grounded in their own beliefs, to acquire a more adequate understanding of the traditions of the non-Roman Catholics, including their theological, spiritual, and liturgical life. Part of this endeavor is to involve discussion between Roman Catholics and the "separated brethren." "From dialogue of this sort will emerge still more clearly what the true posture of the Catholic Church is. In this way, too, we will better understand the attitude of our separated brethren and more aptly present our own belief."[23]

Another aspect of this effort to acquire a more adequate understanding of Protestants and Eastern Orthodox is that instruction in theology and Church history is to be presented from an ecumenical point of view, "so that at every point they may more accurately correspond with the facts of the case."[24] Every attempt is to be made to know other communions as they are rather than through the distorted images of them that have been inherited from past polemical disputes.

Vatican II also holds that there is a close and vital relationship between resourcement, renewal, and the ecumenical movement.

> Church renewal ... has notable ecumenical importance. Already this renewal is taking place in various spheres of the Church's life: the biblical and liturgical movements, the preaching of the word of God, catechetics, the apostolate of the laity, new forms of religious life and the spirituality of married life, and the Church's social teaching and activity. All these should be considered as favorable pledges and signs of ecumenical progress in the future.[25]

Where will this dual process of resourcement and renewal lead the Roman Catholic Church with regard to the ecumenical movement? Is the "yardstick" for "measuring" any future ecumenical development the present Roman Catholic Church itself or is the criterion Christological, pneumatological, and biblical?[26] At points, Vatican II takes the former opinion, that is, the yardstick is simply present Roman dogmas, offices, and sacraments which is then applied to other communions. At other points, the latter criterion seems to be used. For instance, we have observed that the Council acknowledged that there are values outside of Roman Catholicism which would enrich it and which are a part of the true catholicity of the Church. We also saw that a hierarchy of truths is upheld which at least implies a standard (Christological, pneumatological, biblical) which goes beyond simply asking how much of the image of the Roman Catholic Church is reflected in other ecclesial communions. On this issue E. Schillebeeckx has commented:

> The criterion of comparison between the various churches is not the Roman Catholic Church as such, but the apostolic fullness, the fullness of the messianic promise. In other words, the decree is a successful synthesis of true ecumenism and the conviction of the catholic faith that it really possesses this apostolic fullness, though veiled and always open for further purification.[27]

Nonetheless both views are present in the documents of Vatican II. The future will decide which explication will be the dominant one. There is no question that Congar has opted for the type of interpretation that is found in Schillebeeckx's statement.

An essential part of ecumenism for Congar is spiritual ecumenism, and this element has a prominent place in Vatican II's prescription for Roman Catholic involvement in the ecumenical movement. It holds that nothing significant can occur only through institutional maneuvers and manipulations. What is needed is nothing less than a conversion of outlook, that is, to comprehend that the will of Christ involves the ecumenical movement.

> There can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without a change of heart. For it is from newness of attitudes (cf. Eph. 4:23), from self-denial and unstinted love, that yearnings for unity take rise and grow toward maturity. We should therefore pray to the divine Spirit for

> the grace to be genuinely self-denying, humble, gentle in the service of others, and to have an attitude of brotherly generosity toward them.... Let all Christ's faithful remember that the more purely they strive to live according to the gospel, the more they are fostering and even practicing Christian unity. For they can acheive depth and ease in strengthening mutual brotherhood to the degree that they enjoy profound communion with the Father, the Word, and the Spirit.[28]

Another point of theological identity between Congar and Vatican II is with regard to relation between tradition and Scripture. In general terms, the most important point of the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation was the firm rejection of the two source (Scripture and tradition) theory of revelation and the equally firm adoption of the view that the basic revelation is Jesus Christ himself--which has been handed on through preaching, in writing (Scripture), and in faithful exposition of this writing.

> Hence there exists a close connection and communication between sacred tradition and sacred Scripture. For both of them, flowing from the same divine wellspring, in a certain way merge into a unity and tend toward the same end.[29]

Both Scripture and tradition have their source in the Gospel. Both are needed in the course of history for the full explication and interpretation of the meaning of Jesus Christ. And this obviously means that it is not from Scripture alone that the Church is guided and nourished. Tradition helps to preserve, explain, and proclaim God's Word. Thus together Scripture and tradition from "a mirror in which the pilgrim Church on earth looks at God, from whom she has received everything, until she is brought finally to see Him as He is, face to face."[30]

Are they of equal value as norms of faith? It is clearly stated in Chapter II of *On Divine Ecumenism* that tradition should receive equal devotion and reverence with Scripture, which is the claim that the Council of Trent made. But again, the Council equivocates. Not only the conservative Tridentine view can be found but also a more progressive one that is akin to the position of Congar. For instance Chapter VI begins:

> The Church has always venerated the divine Scripture just as she venerates the body of the Lord, since from the table of both the word of God and of the body of Christ she unceasingly receives and offers to the faithful the bread of life, especially in the sacred liturgy.[31]

Here Scripture is placed on the same level as the presence of the body of Christ in the Eucharist.[32] But in the very next sentence there is again the affirmation that Scripture *and* tradition are the supreme rule of faith. Yet two sentences later one reads:

> Therefore, like the Christian religion itself, all the preaching of the Church must be nourished and ruled by sacred Scripture. For in the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven meets His children with great love and speaks with them; and the force and power in the word of God is so great that it remains the support and energy of the Church.[33]

Although there is a considerable amount of ambiguity present in the text, the general thrust of Chapter VI would seem to be inconsistent with that of Chapter II. In the former, Scripture is given preeminence over tradition.[34] Congar's position is clearly more in line with this point of view, although we have observed that he believes that Scripture should not be isolated from the realities of tradition and the Church.

Without giving details, there are several issues related to the relationship between Scripture and tradition on which Vatican II adopted positions which are present in Congar's ecclesiology. It should be noted that On Divine Revelation carefully states that the teaching authority of the Church always is subject to God's word. It is also affirmed that the human agent of tradition is not just the hierarchy, but the whole people of God.[35] And lastly, it is stated that tradition is dynamic. The Gospel itself does not develop, but under the assistance of the Holy Spirit the Church's understanding of the Gospel increases.[36]

The final point of identity between Congar's ecclesiology and that of Vatican II which we will examine regards their joint emphasis upon collegiality and communion. We have seen that Congar believes that the papacy needs to be understood within the context of the Church as a communion. And in perhaps its most momentous statement--and there were many--Vatican II accepted the notion of the hierarchy as being collegial. The entire episcopacy, with the pope as head, shares in the leadership of the Church.[37] The "papalism" or "ultramontanism" of Vatican I was recognized as incomplete and inadequate, and at the same time the ghost of conciliarism was also denied. The pope is head of the college and not merely one of the bishops. Yet the new point is that neither the pope nor the college of bishops is to be seen as an isolated reality but as together forming a hierarchical communion. "This college, insofar as it is composed of many, expresses the variety and universality of the People of God. But insofar as it is assembled under one head, it expresses the unity of the flock of Christ."[38]

This doctrine of collegiality is carefully and tentatively worded. As we have seen to be the case in other instances in the documents of Vatican II, both progressives (reformers) and conservatives can find support for their own positions. Certainly the explanatory note which was made by the Theological Commission on the very eve of the final vote on the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church was in no sense diminishing the authority and power of the papacy.[39] In spite of this explanation, it cannot be denied that a significant shift had occurred in official Roman Catholic ecclesiology. Congar would say that the principle of communion, which had been neglected for so long, had been officially approved without denying the principle of unity.

This brief survey of points of identity or similarity between the theology of the Church in Congar and Vatican II leads one to the conclusion that Congar has been a theological pathfinder and forerunner in Roman Catholicism. The type of radical reforms in ecclesiology for which he had been pressing throughout his career were, to an amazing extent, adopted by Vatican II. If the post-Tridentine vision of the Church was not completely discarded by Vatican II, it is clear that reformers such as Congar were successful in convincing Roman Catholicism that it was an inadequate vision and that it needed to be deepened and broadened by a biblical, historical, and eschatological vision.

Turning now to my own reflections on Congar's doctrine of the Church, I will begin by acknowledging those major features of his thought with which I as a Protestant theologian am in agreement and applaud. In some instances, I will also suggest ways in which I think Protestantism can be instructed by his ecclesiology.

With its strong emphasis upon the importance of Scripture, a Protestant theologian can only be encouraged by the strong biblical thrust of Congar's interpretation of the reality of the Church. Moving behind the various developments that have occurred in the history of Roman Catholicism, Congar has made every effort to construct his ecclesiology upon the foundation of sacred history, which he believes to be based upon the witness of Scripture. Such pivotal concepts for him as the people of God, servant, and communion all have their basis in the Bible. And when one examines his explication of the Church as the Body of Christ, it is immediately apparent that he is taking the New Testament as his primary point of reference, and not later interpretations of this concept. It is obvious, but nonetheless important, that in so far as Protestantism and Roman Catholicism agree that Scripture is the basis for doing ecclesiology that they will probably discover more and more views that they hold in common. Also both will discover common criteria for reform and a common basis for repudiating certain theological attitudes and expressions.

Congar's adoption of a plurality of biblical images to express the nature of the Church is another procedure that has considerable merit. Not only is it a method that is grounded in Scripture, but it also offers, in the light of the history of ecclesiology, a corrective for overcoming the type of distortion that always seems to arise when only one image or concept is utilized. Congar's own success in overcoming a myopia that sees the Church primarily as a visible and monarchical society indicates that the validity of this type of pluralistic approach. As Paul Minear has indicated, each of the images of the New Testament is too elastic as well as too ambiguous to allow us to use only one of them to define the Church. The more adequate procedure, he says, is to see how the various images benefit from, and complement each other.[40] Protestant theology may well need to examine itself on this point. Claude Welch has observed that with the exception of certain suggestions in Barth there has been little development of the concept of the Body of Christ in Protestant theology.[41] If this is the case, then Protestants must be honest and ask themselves whether this "lack" is defensible and whether it is not the result of a traditional anti-Roman Catholic bias.

The third feature in Congar's doctrine of the Church that must be applauded is his emphasis upon the Church as a communion. Protestant theologians have observed that in the beginning the Christian Church was a communion of saints and not an institution for salvation. It was in order that the Church could have a guarantee about the decisions it was making with regard to questions of membership and doctrine that it adopted the office of bishop as being the "channel" of the Holy Spirit. The office was seen as guaranteeing the authentic tradition.[42] Gradually the Church came to be seen as primarily a sacramental reality. "Now the holiness of the Church is identical with the sacramental gifts, especially with the sacramental power of the clergy."[43] The movement was one from a fellowship of holiness to institutional holiness. The latter became the condition of the former.

Several things need to be said on this point. Obviously, Congar does not adopt the type of sectarian ecclesiology which holds that the spiritual communion of the faithful is the Church. Repeatedly, we have observed that Congar stands firmly within the Roman Catholic heritage of giving a certain primacy to the Church as a sacramental reality. Yet it has been equally clear that one of the major intents of his theology has been to restore the concept of the Church as a communion. In the time between Christ as Alpha and Christ as Omega, the Church has both a structure-pole and a life-pole--it is both a sacramental reality and a communion. Moreover, he has stressed that the former exists only for the establishment of the latter. If Protestant theology still cannot accept this view of the structure of the Church--mainly because it seems like a divinization of that which is human and historical--it must acknowledge that it is certainly more biblical than those Roman Catholic views that saw the structure primarily on the model of worldly authority and power, and had nothing to say about the Church as a communion.

An aspect of Congar's theology of the Church that is closely related to his emphasis upon communion is his development of a full-fledged theology of the laity. Again, a Protestant will find his placement of the laity only with the life-pole of the Church and not in any way within the structure-pole to be unacceptable. But, in spite of this important reservation, Congar's stress upon the laity and its role in the mission of the Church certainly proves that Roman Catholicism and a theology of the laity are not incompatible. And perhaps Protestantism must again be honest with itself and ask whether or not in fact it does not in its concrete Church life generally function with a type of implicit relegation of the laity to the life-pole. We have had a great deal of writing about a theology of the laity. Clearly, our tradition supports this concern. Yet one is left with the strong impression that we still have a very strong clerical cast.

Another feature of Congar's ecclesiology which Protestant theology can applaud is his affirmation that the Church always is being called by God to reform itself. At least at a theological level, this has been one of the major tenets of Protestant theologians such as Schleiermacher, Forsyth, Tillich, and Barth have argued that the Reformation was not a single event that happened in the sixteenth century but an event that should repeatedly occur. In moments that have been more characterized by pride than by honesty, Protestants have often been convinced that reform automatically belonged to them. Congar has correctly reminded us of the fact that it is wrong to look at the history of the Church as if reform has been the concern of Protestantism alone. One suspects, for instance, that the very term "pre-reformer," as Protestant Church historians frequently use it, reflects a biased position on this matter. By reminding us of the longer history of reform, Congar has convincingly argued that reform can and should be a part of Roman Catholic ecclesiology.

In fact, Congar's exciting analysis of reform implicitly directs a pertinent question to Protestants: Do we take the principle _ecclesia_ _semper_ _reformanda_ seriously? At the theoretical level, we do. But what about in our actual theological and ecclesiastical life? Karl Barth has often been used by those of us who are Protestants to "attack" Roman Catholic doctrines of the Church. How frequently we have glibly raised such Barthian criticism as that within Roman Catholic theology the Word of God is not allowed to stand over against and judge the Church, without in fact letting ourselves be judged by this Word (Barth himself cannot be accused of this glibness).

And on this precise issue, Barth's comments on Vatican II are quite relevant for us. In analyzing what was taking place at the council, he acknowledged that the very type of self-criticism and reform which it had been assumed could not take place in the Roman Catholic Church was in fact occurring. He suggested that Jesus Christ, through the presence of the prophetic and apostolic Scripture, had once again stepped into the center of Roman Catholic theology. And he pointedly asks whether we on our "side" have any realization of what type of shaking of the foundations might occur if a similar movement took place among us--he specifically mentions "the so doughty churches of the United States."[44]

> How would things look if Rome (without ceasing to be Rome) were one day simply to overtake us and place us in the shadows, so far as renewing of the Church through the Word and the Spirit of the Gospel is concerned? What if we should discover that the last are the first and the first last, that the voice of the Good Shepard should find a clearer echo over there than among us?[45]

This is what I think Congar's analysis also asks us. And because he sees reform to be essential for the ecumenical movement one can also say that he hopes for and prays for our reform while he participates in a more direct manner in renewal with Roman Catholicism.

From the point of view of Protestantism, there are many aspects of Congar's interpretation of the ecumenical movement that I find appealing. One can only admire the manner in which he is simultaneously a vigorous supporter of Roman Catholicism and open to Protestantism--particularly since he was moving against the dominant stream of Roman Catholic thinking on this matter for such a long time. And certainly his position that dialogue, spiritual ecumenism, and *resourcement* are necessary for any significant ecumenical progress is congenial to a Protestant ecumenical stance.

In light of what the situation was just ten years ago, it still seems amazing--and even impossible--that important discussion is taking place at all ecclesiastical levels between Protestants and Roman Catholics. Even though the term dialogue has had the misfortune of having some of its more profound connotations worn smooth through imprecise usage, what Congar means by it still has tremendous potential for ecumenism. Just the possibility of removing the various forms of "Roman" and "Luther" complexes--that is, the distorted images we have of each other--is a matter of considerable consequence.

The importance of spiritual ecumenism for Congar is also a good corrective to certain Protestant predispositions. One suspects that the tendency, at least in the United States, is to speak of any renewal that is related to the ecumenical movement in terms of institutional reform. And certainly, as Congar himself has argued, significant reform must involve theological and institutional reform. But do we as Protestants take as seriously the need of actual repentance and conversion? Perhaps such terms connote for much of Protestantism an undesirable revivalism and pietism. Yet if we are to be more adequately and completely shaped by the Source of our faith, are not repentance and conversion precisely what are required? Since I am from the Methodist tradition, I can observe that in the recent discussion, preparation, and enactment of the union between the Methodist Church and the Evangelical and United Brethren Church that the type of shaking of the foundation that such terms as repentance and conversion imply did not move strongly from the lower "rungs," from an institutional standpoint, of the Methodist Church, in men like Albert Outler, to the top. Too much of the proceeding was carried out in terms of corporate merger and expansion. To generalize, the union was much too much an exercise in a Methodist version of an ecclesiology of glory or of a triumphant view of the role of the Church in history. One wonders what might have occurred if the concept of the Church as servant had been a more dominant one.

The values of resourcement are also becoming increasingly obvious to Protestants. Contemporary liturgical renewal is a good example. We are realizing that we too have been victims of a narrowing of tradition, which as in the case of worship, has often resulted in the loss of important parts of our authentic heritage. Protestants have long decried the lack of preaching in Roman Catholicism, while all too frequently we have participated in the Lord's Supper as infrequently as two or four time a year--which is not only a betrayal of the New Testament Church but of Luther, Calvin, and Wesley. As Congar has frequently stated, how quick we are to see the weak point on the other side and how slow to see it among ourselves.

Or, to change our example, we can readily agree with Congar that much of Roman Catholic ecclesiology has been formed as a reaction against Protestantism. But how often do we go about the much more painful process of seriously asking ourselves how much of Protestant ecclesiology has been a reaction against certain forms of Roman Catholicism. For instance, the debate that has developed over the question of "early catholicism" in the New Testament between Käsemann and Hans Küng raises this question in an acute manner.[46] Käsemann argues that in Luke-Acts, parts of Matthew, the Pastoral, Ephesians, Jude, and II Peter one finds features of an "early catholicism." By "early catholicism" Käsemann means the organization of the Church according to a hierarchical order, emphasis upon a doctrinal rule of faith, the development of the principle of apostolic succession and transmitted authority, and the moralizing of faith All of these are distortions, for Käsemann, of the authentic gospel which upholds a charismatic ministry, faith as a Spirit-motivated response, and faith expressing itself in love. This raises the crucial question about what one does with the contradictions that are already found within the New Testament. Käsemann holds that the gospel and not the canon provides the criterion of the unity of the Church.[47] On the other hand, for Küng, Käsemann's suggested solution is one of exegetical subjectivity, that is, he resorts to the criterion of the justifying Word of God in order to exclude certain New Testament expressions of the Christian faith. Küng claims that the option for the Protestant theologian and exegete is: "either to accept early catholicism as an element of the New Testament and thereby definitely embark on the road to 'late catholicism' or else reject early catholicism as an element of the New Testament and correct the canon accordingly."[48] Käsemann has chosen, for Küng, the second solution, Roman Catholicism obviously opts for the first possibility, that is, it accepts the canon in its totality.

As John Eliot has commented, this debate has raised important ecumenical questions for both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. With regard to the former, does the type of early catholicism that is found in the New Testament lead inevitably to Rome? And is not the tendency of Roman Catholic theology to blunt the edges of the various texts of the New Testament in such a way that variations and contradictions are made to fit into a picture of development. With regard to Protestantism, Eliot remarks:

> But perhaps Father Küng is correct when he states that, basically, the question of early catholicism is a question of

> ecclesiology and that the protest against early catholicism is a protest against all that is catholic, including the Roman Catholic Church itself. If this is true, then the responsibility of coming to grips with this matter, dare not be left to the exegete alone. For the attitude toward the Church in this generation also, as either a product of decadent catholicism or the intended results of the Spirit's guidance, will be determined in no small degree by the outcome of the discussion about early catholicism in the New Testament.[49]

This is a thorny problem that Käsemann and Küng have been exploring. But I think their endeavors illustrate the need for resourcement--and the need for as much candor as possible on the part of both sides as we return to the sources, for otherwise we will be willing to find only that which we already accept to be true.

Having mentioned the major points in Congar's ecclesiology which I believe that Protestant theology can applaud as well as indicated some of the ways in which Protestantism can be instructed by Congar, I want to pose one basic criticism of his doctrine of the Church. The criticism is that Congar too closely identifies the reality of the Roman Catholic Church with the Kingdom of God, or to put it another way, he has inadequate understanding of the structure-pole of the Church. This criticism is a traditional one which Protestantism has raised against Roman Catholic theology, but I think that it is, with certain important qualifications, still applicable to Congar.

But first the qualifications should be made, since we have observed that in a number of ways Congar's position on this subject must be distinguished from many traditional Roman Catholic ecclesiologies. Because these points have already been dealt with in detail in our previous analysis, it will suffice for our present purpose simply to list them. With his strong eschatological emphasis, Congar has argued that the Church is a pilgrim people which has not reached but is pressing on towards its goal. He has indicated the dangers that are inherent in speaking of the Church as the extension of the Incarnation. He has affirmed the need of holding that the Church is both holy and sinful. He has held that the Church must constantly be reformed. He has developed the position that the Holy Spirit transcends the Church as well as is present within it, and that the Spirit works not only through the structure of the Church but in unexpected ways. But in spite of all these important qualifications, the tendency of too closely identifying the Kingdom of God with the Church persists in Congar's ecclesiology.

Protestant theology affirms the radical freedom of the Holy Spirit. The Church does not in any sense possess or control the Spirit. The power and the guidance of God belong to him and not to us. The people of God is always in the position of praying and waiting for the Holy Spirit. Jacques Ellul has written:

> The whole history of the Church is the history of the reformation of the Church by the Spirit. The work must not cease,

> for Satan who attacks the Church from without does not stop, and the Spirit of God which gives life to the Church by reforming it, does not stop either.... The permanent reformation of the Church is therefore the obedience of the Church to the Spirit; it means accepting that God leads his Church forward and changes it, that the Church does not settle down in a revelation which it treats as if it were its own property, but rather that it is constantly on the lookout to receive the new order which the Spirit brings.[50]

A danger that Protestantism has usually seen in Roman Catholicism is that it has identified the operation of the Holy Spirit with the ongoing process of the institution.

But does this criticism apply to Congar? For him, the Spirit is present in the Church, but always as a gift. The Church does not control the Spirit. The Church knows the Spirit is present because God, not man, has promised the Spirit's indwelling guidance and assistance. Yet, for the Protestant there is always the possibility that the people of God have abandoned the promise--perhaps even by claiming to be the people of God without waiting to be the Church through God's grace. Robert McAfee Brown has compactly summarized this point:

> So Protestants will have a "style of life" that is not easy to describe but nevertheless has upon it the stamp of authenticity and integrity. It involves an assurance about God combined with modesty concerning the reports we make about God.... It means the assurance of an ultimate security and the likelihood of an immediate insecurity. It means a risk, but a risk in the context of a promise. "The new order which the Spirit brings" will be an order in which the vessels are still earthen. Our hope does not lie in the fact that the transcendent power will then belong to us.

> It lies in the fact that the transcendent power will never belong to us, but that it belongs to God--the God who meets our sin with his grace, and who meets our misuse of his grace with his healing and corrective power.[51]

Ultimately, the Protestant protests against any absolute claim that is made for any relative reality, including the Church. Paul Tillich has said this quite forcefully for the present generation of Protestants.

> It [the Protestant principle] is the guardian against the attempts of the finite and conditioned to usurp the place of the unconditional in thinking and acting. It is the prophetic judgment against religious pride, ecclesiastical arrogance, and secular self-sufficiency and their destructive consequences.[52]

Congar would deny that the Church, in its structure-pole, can usurp the place of God. And he immediately would raise the point that was examined earlier, namely that Protestantism does not distinguish with sufficient seriousness between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. What is one to make of this criticism? Certainly at one level it is not an accurate description of contemporary Protestant theology. For instance, Cullmann speaks of the Christ-event as the key or mid-point of all history. The decisive battle has taken place and "Victory Day" has occured in Christ. The Old Covenant, for Cullmann, is a time of preparation for Jesus, and hence is not in any way equal with the event to which it pointed. More radically, Rudolf Bultmann holds that for the Christian faith there is such a qualitative gap between the Old and the New Testaments that the former is not revelation for the Christian.[53] As Carl Michalson has written:

> The appearance of Christ is an event which supersedes all previous events and teleologically suspends all previous acts of obedience by an imperious claim to be the sole authentic form of all existence. Everything hinges on Christ. As the New Testament affirms, it is in Christ that all things now cohere.[54]

But one suspects that these kinds of positions do not meet the whole intent of Congar's criticism. What he is claiming is that Protestant ecclesiology has not taken into account sufficiently that Jesus instituted sacramental and hierarchical means (structure-pole) by which the Church as communion (life-pole) will be established throughout the remainder of the course of sacred history. In brief, Protestantism, for Congar, has rejected the validity of the structure-pole of the Church.

As we saw in Chapter Two, it is for this reason that Congar holds that Protestantism, and not Roman Catholicism, is guilty of upholding an ecclesiology of glory, that is it fails to see that God through Jesus Christ has chosen certain means or instruments by which the Christian life is communicated. Congar states that in Roman Catholic thinking the order of salvation is: Incarnate Word, Church-institution (structure-pole), Christian life, and Church-communion (life-pole). In Protestantism the order is: heavenly Christ, Christian life, Church-communion, Church-institution.[55] Hence Congar writes that in Luther, for instance, the exterior order of the Church is entirely engendered by the interior order of Word and faith. For Luther, the structure-pole has only the role of sign and not of agent, that is, it may indicate where the true Church is but it does not establish it.

> The Church [for Luther] is therefore in itself wholly spiritual and invisible. But it renders itself visible. It manifests its presence in the world by marks: baptism, eucharist, and Gospel. But these perceptible realities are envisaged by Luther only as a symbol and mark, in the perspective of a movement going from interior to exterior and not truly as a means of realization or cause, in the perspective of a movement going from exterior to the interior.[56]

And what Congar has to say about Luther holds true for his overall view of Protestant ecclesiology.

The first thing that needs to be said in response to Congar's criticism is that at least to a certain extent Congar misunderstands the Protestant view of the Church. The structure of the Church--word, sacraments, ministry--form an indispensible part in the transmission of the Gospel from individual to individual and generation to generation. Word, sacrament, and ministry are more than explicit signs of the reality of the Church. They are also means. As Claude Welch has written:

> So word, sacrament and ministry together are structures of human existence taken up by the Spirit (which is to say, given to the Church) and used as means whereby the grace of God in Christ is given, the power of his new life made effectual, communicated through the historical life of the people of God.[57]

The signs of the Church both mediate and express the new situation between God and man and man and man that has been made possible by Christ. If my understanding of him on this point is correct, Congar has failed to see that the structure of the Church for Protestantism is a positive vehicle of God's activity.

But even if Congar has not correctly interpreted Protestant ecclesiology on this point, he still has to put his finger on the crux of the difference between Protestant and Roman Catholic views of the Church. The difference is not that the former denies human mediation while the latter affirms it. The difference is the way in which Protestants and Roman Catholics understand the structure. For Congar, the structure-pole of the Church is divine, holy, and infallible. It is a "sphere" or "function" within the Church which the weaknesses, shortcomings, and sin of the people of the Church cannot destroy--although they can obscure it. Protestant theology, on the other hand, cannot acknowledge any "sphere" or "function" as being divine, holy, and infallible. If it adopts and uses such categories as structure-pole and life-pole it must think of them in other ways than as divine and human, perhaps as institution and mission. Of course, Congar affirms human involvement in the structure-pole. But God always remains its direct cause, in a way that cannot be affirmed about the life-pole, and this is why the structure-pole is divine. Protestant theology must reject Congar's view on this matter because he absolutizes a finite form and reality so that it can no longer be subject to the corruption of sin.[58]

A good example of this difference between Protestantism and the Roman Catholicism of Congar is the issue of reform. As we have observed, Congar writes perceptively and forcefully about the need for constant reform within the life-pole of the Church. But for him, reform of the structure-pole is equivalent to ecclesiastical revolution or false reform. There are immutable as well as changeable elements within the Church. Reform is concerned with the latter. And consequently, Congar speaks of reform primarily in terms of development. Certain aspects of the Church are renewed, which causes development, but not the Church in its essence (structure-pole), which is already without spot or wrinkle.

Protestantism affirms that there is always need for reform of the whole Church. No element and no function is exempt from the judgment of God. "The time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God" (I Pet. 4:17). The new age inaugurated by Christ has begun, but the old age is still active. And no dimension of the Church is protected or exempt from its activity. Hence the whole Church must be renewed again and again.[59] I quote Robert McAfee Brown again:

> The danger inherent in Roman Catholicism is that it will equate the treasure and the earthen vessels, and that it will therefore assert that the vessels are no longer earthen. The danger inherent in sectarian Christianity is that it will assume that the treasure can be possessed apart from earthen vessels,

> and that therefore the vessels are no longer necessary. And while there is no assurance that Protestantism will not continually be impaled on one of another of the horns of this dilemma, there is always a great evangelical responsibility and possibility for Protestantism. For at its best, Protestantism can recognize both that there is a treasure, Jesus Christ, and that this treasure is mediated to us through earthen vessels. Without the treasure Protestantism is nothing. But without the recognition that its vessels are earthen, Protestantism betrays the treasure and forgets that "the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us."[60]

When Congar affirms Jesus as the Christ he believes that this necessarily implies the affirmation that the structure-pole (vessels) of the Church is divine. Protestantism does not accept this conjunction. For it, the Gospel not only uses the vessels but it also stands over against them and judges them.

Thus it is on this issue of the "condition" of the structure-pole of the Church or the relationship of the Church to the Kingdom of God that Congar's ecclesiology and a Protestant doctrine of the Church most sharply differ. As I indicated in Chapter Two, I do not believe that it is accurate to say that Congar upholds an ecclesiology of glory. There is too strong a theme of servanthood in his theology for this to be the case. Nonetheless there is still a considerable degree of difference between his position on this matter and one that Protestant theology can find acceptable. But this is precisely one of the places where discussion between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism must continue. Congar has stressed the charismatic and event side of the

Church. Does this affirmation not go along way towards de-absolutizing the structure-pole of the Church--since it is suggested that the Spirit can use other ecclesiastical vessels than those which comprise the structure? And in what sense does Protestantism's affirmation that word, sacraments, and ministry are indispensable for the ongoing life of the Church move it in the direction of Congar's position that the structure-pole of the Church is the instrument by which the communion or people of God is formed. And if they are indispensable, although ambiguous because of sin, is it not because they are particularly closely related to the mission of Christ? And if this is the case, does not simply holding them to be indispensable mean much the same thing that Congar means by saying that they are directly caused by God? Hopefully, such discussion has only begun between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism.

In conclusion, it must be said that Congar has been a pathfinder. He has been influential both in blazing a new direction of thought in the Roman Catholic Church and in opening new possibilities in Protestant and Roman Catholic relations. It is a truism to say that we, at least penultimately, do not know what the future holds. It is still too soon after Vatican II to know what type of influence it will have upon the future shape and direction of Roman Catholicism--and Protestantism. And the future of the ecumenical movement is highly problematical. But in both cases, Congar has sought paths by which the pilgrim people of God can more obediently follow their Lord, who, in Congar's view, leads the Church to communicate the Gospel of reconciliation to the urgent needs of our splintered and warring world. For the title of one of his books Congar borrowed John Wesley's phrase: "The wide world, my parish." As a Methodist, I would claim that in his attempt to fulfill his calling as a pathfinder in ecclesiology and ecumenism, Congar's concerns have been both as catholic and as evangelical as this phrase would suggest.

Notes to Chapter VIII

[1] Albert Outler, "A Response," in *The Documents of Vatican II*, ed. by Walter M. Abbott, S.J. (New York: Guild Press and Association Press, 1966), p. 102.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 103.

[3] "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church," in Abbott, *The Documents of Vatican II*, Arts. 6-7, pp. 18-22.

[4] When the first schema on the Church was presented to the Council in 1962 a great majority of bishops held that it was too legalistic and scholastic in character. They felt that it was not written in the spirit in which Pope John XXIII had called the Council. For instance, Bishop de Smedt accused the authors of the schema of clericalism, legalism, and absolutism. A revision was prepared. This time the outline contained the following chapters: 1) Of the Mystery of the Church; 2) Of the Hierarchical Order, Especially the Office of Bishop; 3) Of the People of God, Especially the Lay People; 4) Of the Call to Holiness in the Church. Although this version stressed that the Church is a mystery and expressed a much stronger biblical point of view, it was felt that these tendencies needed to be more completely developed. In the second revision there was a significant reshaping of material, and the addition of four chapters. For our present discussion, the most significant change was that the chapter on the people of God was placed before the one on the hierarchy. (K. E. Skydsgaard, "The Church as Mystery and as People of God," pp. 145-49.)

[5] "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church," pp. 24-26.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 26.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

[8] E. Schillebeeckx, O.P., *Vatican II: The Real Achievement*, trans. by H. J. J. Vaughan (London: Sheed and Ward, 1967), p. 29.

[9] "Decree on Ecumenism," in Abbott, *The Documents of Vatican II*, p. 345.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 350. This statement also reflects part of Pope John XXIII's important address at the beginning of Vatican II. In this speech, he distinguished between the unchanging deposit of faith and the changing form in which this deposit is presented. (Pope John XXIII, "The Opening Address of the Second Vatican Council," in *The Teachings of*

Second Vatican Council [Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1966], pp. 7-8.) We have seen that this distinction is one of the fundamental notions of Congar's own analysis of reform. It would seem that Pope John XXIII was suggesting that the general direction which the "new theologians" had taken on this matter should be pursued. See Chapter One for a discussion of this issue, particularly as it was formulated, H. Bouillard, and Chapter 6 where Congar's position on this subject is discussed.

[11] "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church," pp. 62-63.

[12] _Ibid_., p. 67.

[13] "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy," in _The Documents of Vatican II_, pp. 150-51.

[14] _Ibid_., p. 172.

[15] _Ibid_., p. 144.

[16] _Ibid_., pp. 149-50.

[17] Skydsgaard, "The Church as Mystery and as People of God," pp. 154-55.

[18] "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church," p. 23.

[19] "Decree on Ecumenism," p. 345-46.

[20] Quoted in Brown, _The Ecumenical Revolution_, p. 189.

[21] "Decree on Ecumenism," Art. 4, p. 349.

[22] _Ibid_., Art. 11, p. 354.

[23] _Ibid_., Art. 9, p. 353.

[24] _Ibid_., Art. 10, p. 353.

[25] _Ibid_., Art. 7, p. 351.

[26] Edmund Schlink, "The Decree on Ecumenism," in _Dialogue on the Way_, p. 220.

[27] Schillebeeckx, _Vatican II: The Real Achievement_, p. 33.

[28] "Decree on Ecumenism," Art. 7, p. 351.

[29] "Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation," in Abbott, _The Documents of Vatican II_, Art. 9, p. 117.

[30] Ibid., Art. 7, p. 115.

[31] Ibid., Art. 21, p. 125.

[32] Commenting on this point, E. Schillebeeckx writes: "Whereas altar-and-chalice was formerly, as it were, the symbolism of catholicism and, obviously, of the counter-reformation, the Bible is now also taken as a symbol of the Catholic Church alongside the chalice. This dogmatic constitution officially spells an end to catholicism's 'counter-reformation' attitude." (Vatican II; The Real Achievement, pp. 40-41.)

[33] "Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation," Art. 21, p. 125.

[34] I first became aware of the two points of view in the text of On Divine Revelation in reading Kristen Ejner Skydsgaard, "Scripture and Tradition," in Challenge and Response, ed. by Warren A. Quanbeck (Minneapolis: Augsberg Publishing House, 1966), pp. 44-46.

[35] "Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation," Art. 10, pp. 117-118.

[36] Ibid., Art. 8, p. 116.

[37] "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church," Art. 18, p. 38.

[38] Ibid., Art. 22, pp. 43-44.

[39] Abbott, The Documents of Vatican II, pp. 97-101.

[40] Paul S. Minear, Images of the Church in the New Testament (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), p. 225.

[41] Claude Welch, The Reality of the Church (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p. 188.

[42] Emil Brunner, The Christian Doctrine of the Church, Faith and Consummation, p. 69.

[43] Paul Tillich, A History of Christian Thought, ed. by Carl E. Braaten (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), pp. 131-32.

[44] Karl Barth, "Thoughts on the Second Vatican Council," Ecumenical Review, XV (July, 1963), p. 363.

[45] Ibid., p. 364. To compare the change that occurred in Rome and in Barth's thinking, Robert McAfee Brown contrasts this statement with one Barth made to Fr. Danielou

on the absence of Rome from the Amsterdam Conference to the World Council of Churches in 1948: "Your Church could simply not have set next to us, but (visibly or invisibly) high above us somewhere on a throne. There just is no room for the rich among the poor.... It is asking too much that we should take your claims to superiority completely seriously and at the same time look forward to your presence among us." (Quoted in Brown, The Ecumenical Revolution, p. 88.)

[46] For Käsemann's views see: Ernst Käsemann, Essays on New Testament Themes, trans. by W. J. Montague, Studies in Biblical Theology, Vol. XL (London: SCM Press, 1963), pp. 48-62, 63-94, 95-107, 169-95; "Paul and Nascent Catholicism," in Distinctive Protestant and Catholic Themes Reconsidered, ed. by Robert W. Funk and Gerhard Ebeling, Journal for Theology and the Church, Vol. III (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), pp. 14-27; Hans Küng, The Council in Action: Theological Reflections on the Second Vatican Council, trans. by Cecily Hastings (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1963). A summary of and response to this debate is John E. Eliot, "The New Testament is Catholic: A Reevaluation of Sola Scriptura," in Una Sancta, XXIII (1968), p. 3-18.

[47] Käsemann, Essays on New Testament Themes, pp. 106-107.

[48] Quoted in Eliot, "The New Testament is Catholic: A Reevaluation of Sola Scripture, p. 8.

[49] Eliot, "The New Testament is Catholic: A Reevaluation of Sola Scriptura," p. 16.

[50] Quoted in Robert McAfee Brown, The Spirit of Protestantism (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 49.

[51] Ibid., pp. 49-50.

[52] Paul Tillich, The Protestant Era, trans. by James Luther Adams (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948), p. 163.

[53] Rudolf Bultmann, Essays, Philosophical and Theological, trans. by J. C. G. Greig (London: SCM Press, 1955), pp. 115-118.

[54] Carl Michalson, The Hinge of History (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959), p. 45.

[55] Congar, Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église, p. 442.

[56] Ibid., pp. 404-405.

[57] Welch, The Reality of the Church, p. 240.

[58] *Ibid*., p. 244.

[59] Visser t'Hooft, The Renewal of the Church, pp.36-47.

[60] Brown, The Spirit of Protestantism, pp. 48-49.

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